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MARXIAN SOCIALISM AND RELIGION

A Study of the Relation of the Marxi... Theories to the Fundamental Principles of ... rion

BY

JOHN SPARGO

Author of "Socialism, a Summary and Interpretation c... ist Principles," "Applied Socialism," "The Substan... of Socialism," "Syndicalism, Industrial Union-ism and Socialism," etc., etc.

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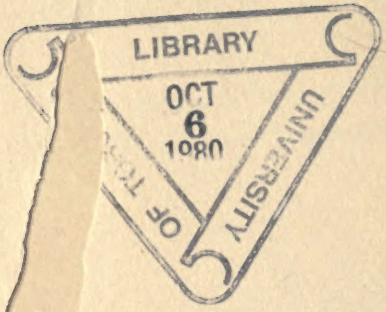

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TO

NINA BULL

Amicus usque ad aras

PREFACE

THE Socialist challenge to the heart and brain of modern civilization has inspired a literature of vast magnitude. Socialism has been advocated and opposed, praised and condemned, in a bewildering array of books and pamphlets, printed in all languages and dealing with the subject from every point of view imaginable.

A considerable portion of this great mass of literature deals with the subject of religion and the relation of Socialism thereto. Anti-Socialist writers have claimed, in numerous books and pamphlets, that Socialism is the deadly enemy of religion, while the advocates of Socialism, in books and pamphlets equally numerous, have denied the accusation.

To support their charge, the Anti-Socialists have gleaned from the writings and speeches of Socialists a formidable array of atheistic and anti-religious quotations. Every statement by a Socialist, assailing or ridiculing religious beliefs, ceremonies or institutions, has been carefully preserved to become a shaft in the Anti-Socialist quiver.

To refute the charge, the Socialist advocates

have declared that the anti-religious utterances quoted against them must be regarded as the expression of individual opinions, in nowise binding upon or committing the Socialist movement. They have made the most of the formal declarations of the Socialist parties that Socialism is not antagonistic to religion. Against the anti-religious statements of some Socialists they have balanced the religious statements of other Socialists, and the Socialist utterances of noted religious leaders. In England, the charge that Socialism and atheism go together was met by the challenge of the Socialists that for every atheist among Socialists named by the Anti-Socialists they would name a dozen among well-known members of the Liberal and Tory parties. As in the theological controversies of an earlier day, there has been a warfare of texts.

Naturally, this method of controversy has brought forth all the evils manifested in the theological disputations of the past. Textual warfare develops the worst phases of partizanship. Isolated passages, torn from their contexts, have been made to convey meanings quite opposed to the intention of their authors; numerous and interminable disputes have taken place over the interpretation of obscure texts, and there have been mistranslations, cunning interpolations and for-

geries — quite after the fashion of theological controversy.

But the gravest objection of all to the method is that it leads nowhere and can determine nothing except the fact that many Socialists have opposed religion. And that fact no candid mind will attempt to deny. When so much has been shown, we are as far as ever from knowing whether opposition to religion by Socialists is accidental, an individual matter, resulting from the mental and temperamental peculiarities of individuals, or from their intellectual environment, or whether it is the logical and necessary outcome of the Socialist philosophy.

So far as I am aware, the present volume is the only work on the subject of Socialism and religion which absolutely ignores the warfare of texts. It is the only work on the subject, so far as I am aware, which attempts to determine whether or not Socialism and religion are opposed to each other, by means of a candid analysis and comparison of both. Whatever the defects of this contribution to the discussion may be, it has at least this merit: it approaches the question in a more philosophical spirit than has generally prevailed, and in a manner less open to abuse.

I have carefully distinguished between Socialism as an economic programme and the Marxian the-

ories which form the theoretical and philosophical basis of the modern Socialist movement. After a careful analysis of religion, ending with a definition of religion which is entirely candid and free from the charge of evasiveness, I have carefully outlined the Marxian synthesis, with special emphasis upon the one doctrine in it which has been held by most Anti-Socialist writers, and some Socialist writers, to be incompatible with religious belief. I have tried to show that there is nothing in the Marxian theories, or in any of their necessary implications, which the essential principles of religion either explicitly or implicitly oppose or deny. I believe that I have demonstrated this beyond reasonable doubt, and that the open-minded reader will be compelled to acknowledge that Marxism and religion are not mutually exclusive; that there is nothing in the Marxian system of thought which requires a denial of belief in God, the Creator and Moral Ruler of the Universe, or of belief in the immortality of the soul.

In my attempt to show how the Marxian theory of the materialistic conception of history applies to the evolution of religious conceptions, how man's conceptions of God and of immortality are influenced by his economic conditions and his material environment in general, I have advanced a number of suggestions which, I must in fairness

warn the reader, are personal speculations only. They are no part of the theory itself and their refutation would not weaken the theory in any particular. Furthermore, while the Socialist movement may be charged with responsibility for the theory so long as its advocates and spokesmen base their arguments upon it, for these personal speculations in which I have indulged the Socialist movement cannot justly be held responsible. I wish that it were possible for me to believe that this statement will prevent any of the critics of the Socialist movement from making the claim that the suggestions to which I refer are inherent in the Socialist philosophy and holding my comrades responsible for them. My experience forbids the hope. Nevertheless, for honest minds, I have forestalled that trick.

As far as possible, I have acknowledged in the text my indebtedness to other writers. But I am especially indebted for their definitions of religion to Professor Thomas C. Hall, D.D.; Rev. George Hodges, D.D.; Professor Charles P. Fagnani, D.D.; Rev. Samuel Schulman, D.D.; Rev. Maurice Harris, D.D.; Rev. John Augustus Ryan, D.D.; Professor Simon N. Patten and Mr. Rufus W. Weeks. I am also obliged for various courtesies to the Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter; Rev. Anson Phelps

Stokes, of Yale; Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, and Mr. Algernon Lee, Educational Director of the Rand School of Social Science, New York.

It is my earnest hope that the book will contribute to a better understanding of Socialism by many men and women of religious belief and affiliations, and to a better understanding of religion by my fellow Socialists. If it lessens the misunderstanding and prejudice between these two classes I shall be well content.

J. S.

"NESTLEDOWN,"
Old Bennington, Vermont.
August, 1915.

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MARXIAN SOCIALISM AND RELIGION

CHAPTER I

RELIGION AND THE SOCIALIST PROGRAMME

I

SOCIALISM may be objectively defined in very simple terms. So considered, it means neither more nor less than the reorganization of the economic life of society upon the basis of two very simple principles, namely, democratic collectivism in the production of wealth and liberal individualism in its distribution and consumption. It is not to be confused with communism. It unites communism in production to the private ownership of consumption goods. This union is admirably illustrated by the municipal ownership and operation of such public services as the supply of light, water and ice, and by municipal dwellings. Socialism as a practical movement aims to extend the application of these two principles to cover the economic life of

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society so far as may be necessary to secure the maximum of efficiency and the complete democratization of opportunity.

At present we need not attempt to weigh this economic programme. We need not make any attempt to determine whether the programme is wise or unwise, practical or visionary, progressive or retrogressive. It is no part of our task to pass judgment upon these much mooted points. We are concerned only with the relations existing between the forces organized to advance the programme of Socialism and the forces of organized religion.

It is not an exaggeration to describe the relations of these two movements as actively hostile. For good or ill, whatever the reason may be, a state of warfare exists between them. In the name of religion Socialism is bitterly assailed, while, on the other hand, religion is assailed with equal bitterness in the name of Socialism. This conflict is not temporary, a thing of the moment. It is rather the normal condition of affairs. Of course, there are many on either side who deplore this warfare and denounce it as wrong. Many even go so far as to proclaim that Socialism and religion are kindred forces, having a common object. A large and appreciably growing number of religious leaders take this view, and in the Socialist

movement it is held by many, whose number is likewise increasing. There are many more Socialists who, while not claiming that Socialism and religion are in any sense kindred movements, deny that they are in any sense antagonistic.

Making all due allowance for the salutary influence of these minorities on both sides, the important fact that they *are* minorities remains. It is impossible to read a number of representative religious papers week by week for any considerable length of time without becoming aware of the hostility to Socialism of most of them. Many are merely indifferent, but most are actively hostile. On the other hand, it is equally impossible to read a number of representative Socialist papers and magazines regularly for any considerable length of time without becoming aware of a widespread antagonism to and contempt for religion and all its associations. In the average religious paper the most bitter, brutal, stupid and false charges against Socialism and its advocates are to be found with a frequency which precludes the suggestion of accident as an explanation. In the Socialist papers, with equal frequency, charges just as brutal, stupid and false are hurled against religion and all its associations. The churches may not be formally pledged to fight Socialism; they may even declare that they are neutral, but most of them

do fight it, nevertheless. Most of the Socialist parties are committed to a neutral attitude, their programmes specifically repudiating any hostility to religion, but a very large number of Socialists are bitterly opposed to religion and rarely miss an opportunity to assail or deride it.

This phenomenon is worthy of close examination and study. Why should an earnest and sincere belief in the essentials of religion be regarded as incompatible with an equally earnest and sincere belief in the Socialist programme? Is it impossible for one to believe reverently that beyond the visible world is "a power not ourselves making for righteousness," and to believe also, at the same time, but independently, that public ownership of mines and railways is better than private ownership, that democratic collectivism applied to the production of coal and shoes would be better than the prevailing capitalistic method? What theologian will show wherein such economic beliefs involve unbelief in the responsibility of the human soul to a superior power called God, which, to anticipate somewhat a later stage of our discussion, we may regard as the essence of religion? Or what Socialist will show wherein the idea that the economic basis of society ought to be changed from capitalism to democratic collectivism, from production for private profit to production for social

well-being, logically implies, or even remotely suggests, a denial of the omnipresent impulse to worship a higher power than man, beyond the visible universe, the Eternal and Infinite?

The answers to these questions are obvious. When Socialism is examined concretely, not as a philosophy, but as a programme of practical application to the life of today, it is evident that, no matter what may be thought of the claims made for the programme, it is not inherently opposed to the hypothesis that there exists a Power or Will, known as God, a Supreme Being to whom man voluntarily subjects himself, and whom he recognizes as perfect. That being the case, we must seek elsewhere than in the collectivist programme of Socialism for an explanation of the reciprocal antagonism of organized religion and organized Socialism. For if the specific proposals of Socialism are not incompatible with religious belief and practice, and the essentials of religious belief and conduct are in nowise inimical to the characteristic economic programme of Socialism, the warfare which is the normal relation of the two movements must be due to some other cause than the actual aim of the Socialist movement. In other words, the churches which fight the Socialist movement fight it for some other reason than their belief in religion, and the Socialists who fight religion

do so, not because they believe in Socialism, but for some other reason not originating in that belief.

II

The personality and the teachings of Karl Marx have so completely dominated the literature, the thought, the tactics and the propaganda of the Socialist movement that "Marxism" and "Socialism" have come to be regarded as synonymous terms. That this should be so is quite natural. The international Socialist movement is really dominated and inspired by the theories and practical precepts of Marx. Practically all the organized Socialist movement of the world today proclaims itself to be Marxian. Outside of Marxian Socialism, there is no Socialist movement of any magnitude to arouse either hope of fear, loyalty or hate.

But, notwithstanding all that, Socialism and Marxism are not one and inseparable. The economic programme of Socialism is by no means dependent upon Marx's theories. If Karl Marx had never lived, the Socialist programme for the reorganization of the economic life of society would have been developed, substantially as it is now. If Marx should prove a "false prophet," and all his theories and generalizations be dis-

proved, the demand for the collective ownership and administration of the social instruments and processes of production would not be lessened. Upon the basis of that demand there would of necessity arise a movement of the oppressed and discontented in every nation of the modern capitalist world. As a world phenomenon, international Socialism is by no means limited to the Marxian formulæ. Discredit Marxism and Socialism remains. It is quite possible to reject every one of the theories originated by Marx and still believe in Socialism.

It is highly important that we thus distinguish the simple Socialist programme from the body of dogmas and theories called Marxism, the *credo* of the vast majority of active Socialists throughout the world, in order that we may comprehend the reason for the conflict between religion and Socialism.

The attacks of organized religion are mainly directed against certain of the Marxian dogmas and theories, not against the actual programme of Socialism, which exists quite independently, that is, without a necessary connection with the dogmas and theories in question. And the assaults of representative Socialist writers and orators upon religion and religious institutions do not arise from the necessities of the programme of Social-

ism. In so far as the assaults are made in the name of Socialism, they are due to the necessities, real or imaginary, of theoretical Marxism.

Having denied that there is any incompatibility between religion and practical Socialism as represented by the concrete programme of the movement, we must now broaden the scope of our inquiry. We must next consider whether there is any good reason to regard theoretical Socialism, the Marxian synthesis, as being incompatible with religion. To answer that question satisfactorily, we need to define with care and accuracy what we mean by religion and what we mean by Marxism.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION DEFINED

I

FEW terms of cardinal importance in philosophical and sociological discussion have been so grievously abused and misused as the word *religion*. There is hardly another word of equal importance the meaning of which is so vague, disputed and uncertain. If we compare with it such terms as *philosophy* and *science* we find that these terms, unlike religion, have a fairly definite value in the currency of speech. They have been so accurately and comprehensively defined that they are commonly understood and their use leads to no confusion of thought. But what is religion? Who shall answer with authority? The word seems to have no fixed value. It is so elastic and vague as to be almost void of definite meaning.

By some writers this lack of precise definition is defended and held to be inevitable. Religion, it is argued, relates to infinity and therefore inherently defies definition. Even so profound and

courageous a thinker as Professor Gilbert Murray declares that religion cannot be defined.[1] According to this view, we must conclude that no definition of religion at once true and precise has ever been formulated, or ever can be. If this be true, the discussion of religion — and especially of its relation to philosophy and science — must be permanently clouded by misconceptions and uncertain values. No two disputants can ever be certain that they mean the same thing by religion unless there is an authoritative definition of the term acceptable to both.

If we are to avoid chaos and endless confusion, therefore, we must formulate a definition of religion at once comprehensible and acceptable to both parties to our present discussion, that is, to the exponents of religion and Socialism, respectively, just as we must in the same way formulate, in due course, a similarly satisfying definition of Marxian Socialism.

In the New Testament we find a definition of religion which relates only to man's social relations. It makes religion exclusively a matter of ethics. "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from

[1] *Four Stages of Greek Religion,* by Gilbert Murray, p. 18.

the world." [2] There is no theology in this summary, but simply a very practical ethical view of life. It disregards faith, dogma, ritual, worship, sacerdotalism, and other concomitants of religion, and deals only with the social bond, man's obligation to man. This simple epitome of religion as the Apostle James conceived it might well be the *credo* of an ultra-rationalist. Its emphasis of helpful, loving and sympathetic conduct is by no means unusual among New Testament writers. Peter, Paul and John notably emphasize the virtues of humility, forbearance, sobriety, compassion, forgiveness, self-control and consideration for others. Their writings abound with moral injunctions and the glorification of moral conduct.[3]

The apostolic definition of religion suggests the fine saying of the Prophet Micah, which Professor Huxley accepted as the best available definition of religion: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" [4] Here, as in the case

[2] James I, 27.

[3] See, e.g., Romans xii, xiii; Corinthians xiii; Galatians vi; Philippians i, iv; Colossians iii; I Thessalonians iv; I Timothy, iv; I Peter iii; I John i.

[4] Micah vi, 8. See also, Isaiah i, 11–17, xliii, 25; lviii, 6, 7; Ezekiel xviii; Hosea vi, 6; viii, 13; x, 12; Amos v, 21; Zechariah vii, 9; Malachi ii, 10.

of the Christian Apostle, the emphasis is upon the human relations. There is indeed the hypothesis of God, a Personality or Power, and the statement of man's duty to regard that Personality or Power with humility. We feel, however, that the Prophet, like the Christian Apostle, regards ethics and religion as identical, or practically so.

It may well be doubted whether this view ever wholly satisfied a thoughtful religious mind. There is more to religion than the perfect fraternalism implied by exalted ethical codes. While we may not omit from our definition of religion its ethical content, we likewise may not regard the ethical content as the whole, or nearly the whole, of religion. That which alone is worthy to be called religion is very much more than an ethical code. It is not wholly concerned with human relations, even where it is the most important influence governing these. We may not assume that justice and lovingkindness among men constitute the sum of religious living. There is no religion without faith. Religion and faith are not synonyms, indeed, any more than are religion and ethics, but they are equally as inseparable. Moreover, in religion, the elements of faith and ethics are not merely joined together, as by arbitrary choice, but they are interdependent and vitally related as cause and effect. Religious *conduct* is

what it is largely because religious *faith* is what it is. To the earnest and devout religious mind service to the Eternal One through service to man is not a verbal conceit, but a vitally important and inspiring faith.

II

Of the numerous formal definitions of religion with which the secular literature of the subject abounds, one of the most comprehensive and illuminating is that given by the late Sir Leslie Stephen in his *English Utilitarians:* "It [religion] implies a philosophy and a poetry; a statement of the conceptions which men have formed of the Universe, of the emotions with which they regard it, and of the ethical conceptions which emerge." [5] What a contrast this lucid statement affords to Matthew Arnold's well-known definition, "Religion is morality touched by emotion." As if the cause and the nature of the emotion were of no significance whatever!

Quite as lucid and as explicit as Sir Leslie Stephen's, but essentially different from it, is this definition by John Stuart Mill: "The essence of religion is the strong and earnest direction of the emotions and desires toward an ideal object, recognized as of the highest excellence, and as rightly

[5] *English Utilitarians,* by Leslie Stephen, London, 1900, p. 506.

paramount over all selfish objects of desire." Mill here assumes that ethical conduct and religion are identical. According to this definition, the zeal of the Single-Taxer, Socialist or Anarchist in pursuit of a goal believed to be "the highest excellence," and "rightly paramount over all selfish objects of desire," is the very essence of religion. Man's conception of the Universe and the emotions with which he regards it are thus summarily banished from the realm of religion.

Another philosopher, Professor Max Müller, on the other hand, so emphasizes the conception of the Universe as to make it appear practically the whole of religion. The element of conduct is almost lost sight of in several of his works on the subject. Thus, in his *Introduction to the Science of Religion* he wrote: "Religion is a mental faculty or disposition, which, independent of, nay in spite of, sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names, and under varying disguises. Without that faculty no religion, not even the lowest worship of idols and fetiches, would be possible; and if we will but listen attentively, we can hear in all religions a groaning of the spirit, a struggle to conceive the inconceivable, to utter the unutterable, a longing after the Infinite, a love of God." In his *Origin of Religion* Müller further emphasizes the view that

religion essentially consists of speculation concerning the Infinite. He substitutes for the term "mental faculty," which might be interpreted to mean a separate religious consciousness, the term "potential energy." The human mind comprises three "faculties" or "potential energies," namely, sense, reason and faith. Both reason and faith are developments of sensuous perception, but they are different, both in kind and in degree. Religion is subjectively defined as "the potential energy which enables man to apprehend the Infinite." [6]

In all this there is no hint that religion relates to conduct in any manner whatsoever. Where writers like Mill ignore that aspect of religion which has to do with the interpretation of the Universe and the perception of a Power or Will designated by the symbols God and the Infinite, Müller ignores all else. True, in a later work, Professor Müller admits this error and confesses the insufficiency of his earlier definitions: "I plead guilty to not having laid sufficient emphasis on the practical side of religion; I admit that mere theories about the Infinite, *unless they influence human conduct,* have no right to the name of religion." [7]

[6] *Origin of Religion,* p. 23.
[7] Cf. the *Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion.*

A similar confession might well have been made by that profoundest of modern thinkers, Herbert Spencer. He, too, devotes himself almost exclusively to the philosophical speculations and assumptions underlying religion and slights the ethical element. While it would be practically impossible without injustice to select a single passage from Spencer's voluminous works and to present it as a formal definition of religion, it is strictly just to say that he regards as "the vital element in all religions" some sort of interpretation of the Universe, "an hypothesis which is supposed to make the Universe comprehensible." [8]

Another interesting definition, which raises a question quite distinct from any of those which we have touched upon, is that of Benjamin Kidd, who says: "A religion is a form of belief providing an ultra-rational sanction for that large class of conduct in the individual where his interests and the interests of the social organism are antagonistic, and by which the former are rendered subordinate to the latter in the general interests of the evolution which the race is undergoing." [9] Why the influence of religion should be supposed to be restricted to those actions in which there is a discernible conflict of the interests of the individ-

[8] See, e.g., *First Principles*, chapters II and V.
[9] *Social Evolution*, by Benjamin Kidd, p. 3.

ual with those of society is not evident. Surely, the qualification is as invalid as it is arbitrary! Religion relates to conduct generally, not to particular phases of conduct. It relates to conduct which is primarily personal in its influence, and which affects the social organism only indirectly or not at all perceptibly, and it equally relates to all that large class of actions in which the interests of the individuals performing those actions appear to be, and are regarded as, identical with those of society in general. In another passage Mr. Kidd says: "No form of belief is capable of functioning as a religion . . . which does not provide an ultra-rational sanction for social conduct in the individual." [10] This statement of what is *not* religion does not imply the arbitrary restriction contained in the formal definition quoted above.

Ernest Renan makes religion identical with rational progress. "My religion is now as ever the progress of reason; in other words, the progress of science," he says.[11] This is less satisfactory, even, than Comte's definition of religion as "the Worship of Humanity." [12] That great and worthy American teacher, Dr. Thomas Davidson, identifies religion with righteous political govern-

[10] *Idem*, pp. 108–109.
[11] In the Preface to *The Future of Science.*
[12] Comte, *Catechisme Positiviste.*

ment: "A religion is that which places us in such harmony with our environment that we attain the highest possible development in knowledge, love and will. But surely no institution was ever better calculated for this than our republic." [13]

William James, in his well-known work, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, says: "In the broadest and most general terms possible, one might say that religious life consists of the belief that there is an unseen order and that our supreme good lies in adjusting ourselves thereto. This belief and this adjustment are the religious attitude of the soul." [14] He goes on to qualify this broad statement by insisting that the *nature* of our regard for the unseen order must be taken into account. "There must be something solemn, serious and tender about any attitude which we call religion." We are reminded by this definition of that by Josiah Royce: "Religion is the consciousness of our practical relation to an invisible, spiritual order." [15]

We may well include in this survey of some of the classic definitions of religion those formulated by two great religious teachers, at once curiously

[13] *American Democracy as a Religion. Inter. Jour, of Ethics*, Vol. x, pp. 37–39.

[14] Page 53.

[15] Quoted by Leuba, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 357.

alike and unlike — James Martineau and G. J. Romanes. Martineau defines religion as "the belief in an ever living God, that is, in a Divine Mind and Will, ruling the Universe and holding moral relations with mankind." [16] Romanes likewise insists that belief in a personal God is essential. "The distinguishing feature of any theory which can properly be termed a religion is that it should refer to the ultimate source or sources of things; that it should suppose this source to be an objective, intelligent and personal nature. . . . To speak of the Religion of the Unknowable, the Religion of Cosmism, the Religion of Humanity, and so forth, where the personality of the First Cause is not recognized, is as unmeaning as it would be to speak of the love of a triangle, or the rationality of the equator." [17]

III

Now religion is not something apart from human experience, unaffected by the growth of knowledge, and by the constant succession of changes in social organization and social understanding. Religion is a product of man's consciousness. The expansion of that consciousness necessarily leads to an expansion of religious con-

[16] Martineau, *A Study of Religion*, p. 1.
[17] Romanes, *Some Thoughts on Religion*, p. 41.

ceptions. Therefore, the question arises, how far do the formulæ we have been considering, the majority of which have come to us from an earlier generation, adequately and fairly reflect the religious consciousness of today? Can the religious consciousness of one age be expressed in the formulæ of another? Moreover, may it not well be doubted whether confessedly non-religious writers, like Mill and Spencer, for example, can interpret religion fairly? The religious believer is entitled to ask that no judgment be passed on religion except as it is defined by the consensus of today's religious thinking.

Among American religious teachers of the present day Dr. Thomas C. Hall holds an honored place. His *History of Ethics Within Organized Christianity* and *Historical Setting of the Early Gospels* take high rank in contemporary religious literature. Dr. Hall defines religion as follows:

"Religion is a reverent attitude of the personality either—(a) toward the totality of life and being generally under the symbol God, or (b) toward some highest reality over against the world (dualism), or (c) toward the complexities of life under the symbols of various gods (polytheism), resulting in a desire for consonance of life-purpose with the highest ideal. As a reaction of the whole man religion has intellectual, emotional and

will elements, and so may result in creeds, cults and rules of conduct, but all of these are but expressions of the fundamental evaluation of experience in terms of permanence and worth." [18]

Dean Hodges, of the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Mass., author of numerous works on religious and theological subjects, and one of the most learned of American theologians, writes:

" (1) Religion, in general terms, is a consciousness of an unseen Power or powers, making, maintaining and ruling the world and man; and a consciousness also of that within us, which is our true self, different from our physical being, and indestructible by death. Religion is the endeavor to establish a right relation between the soul of man and the life of God.

" The rule of God is so constant, universal and unvarying that we are able to express it in terms of cause and effect, and to call it the Reign of Law. But it proceeds under two conditions: first, the freedom of the divine will, by reason of which we may pray to God to act specially on our behalf; and second, the freedom of the human will, in which resides the inevitable possibility of a wrong

[18] This and all other definitions contained in this section, except as otherwise stated, have been specially contributed to this discussion by their authors.

choice, resulting in pain to ourselves and others, but essential to our true humanity.

"The consciousness of the unseen Power results in worship; the conviction of the divine free-will leads to prayer; the exercise of the human free-will appears in conduct.

(2) "Religion, in Christian terms, is all this as it is affected by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. He taught that God is our Father, who desires not only our recognition but our love. He taught also that right conduct, which he held to be of the essence of religion, is both spiritual and social: spiritual in that it includes our motives and the inmost thoughts of our hearts; social, in that it is based on the brotherhood of man in the family of God. By his life and death, especially by faith which means loyal allegiance to him, he saves us, if we will, from the wrong choices which result in pain, and brings us into harmony, in this world and the next, with the unseen Power, our Father."

Dr. Samuel Schulman, Rabbi of Temple Beth El, New York City, has defined religion as "human life lived as in the presence of superior powers called God, or gods." In an address entitled *Our Definition of Religion,* delivered at the New

York State Conference of Religion, in 1905, Dr. Schulman said:

"As a general definition of religion I would venture to say that religion is human life lived as in the presence of God. It is not exclusively feeling, like fear or trust, or dependence, nor is it a special faculty with which the soul discovers the Divine. Being life, it has feeling, but also belief. It thinks something, and is, inevitably, always some deed. When human life reacts upon its environment, not merely as an environment that is seen and understood, and fully exhausted in the mechanism, but as the invisible and the mysterious, and that which transcends the machinery, evident, visible to the senses, and comprehensible to the understanding, it is then living religion. In this definition the word 'life' is given so as to embrace every side of the soul's activity. The phrase 'as in the presence of God' is to point out the second term of the relation in that kind of life which we call religious. In religion there are two elements, man and God; these elements are necessarily permanent. Were the second to vanish, we might have a philosophy of life, but no longer a religion. The environment of life as functioning religiously is the invisible, the unknowable, the ultimate reality, the transcendental,

which we interpret as best we know how (and interpret it we must); but which we know is infinitely more than ourselves." [19]

Another scholarly leader of American Judaism, Dr. Maurice H. Harris, President of the Eastern Council of Reform Rabbis, gives to his confirmation classes this definition: "Religion is our conception of a Power, greater than ourselves, and our persistent effort to come near to his perfection in all things."

The well-known Roman Catholic writer, Dr. John A. Ryan, Professor of Moral Theology and Economics in St. Paul Seminary, accepts and quotes with approval the definition given by Rev. Dr. Aiken, Professor of Apologetics at the Catholic University, Washington, D. C. It may therefore be regarded as an authoritative Catholic statement. The definition reads:

"Religion is essentially a personal relation, the relation of the subject and creature, man, to his Lord and creator, God. Religion may thus be defined as the voluntary subjection of oneself to God, that is, to the free, supernatural being (or beings), on whom man is conscious of being dependent, of whose powerful help he feels the need,

[19] *Addresses Before the New York State Conference of Religion*, Series IV, No. 1, pp. 13–14.

and in whom he recognizes the source of his perfection and happiness." [20]

Professor Charles P. Fagnani, D. D., of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, an active Socialist, offers this definition:

"Religion involves a belief or hypothesis that posits the existence of a Power, or Will, or Personality not unlike ourselves to account for the Universe. (Logically this power itself needs to be accounted for, but that need is more remote and does not press upon us so directly for satisfaction.)

"This hypothesis of God, like every other hypothesis, demands confirmation and since it involves nothing less than the explanation of the Universe, the necessary data for its progressive verification can only come from the accumulative experience of the whole human race throughout its entire history.

"Ideas of God and religion then necessarily change and improve with the progress of man in knowledge and in emancipation from bondage to traditional ideas. The modern tendency is to conceive of God as

Loving
Energetic

[20] *Catholic Encyclopedia,* Vol. XII, p. 739, art. "Religion."

Purposeful
Democratic

working for the advancement of human welfare and the development of human life, in dependence more and more on human coöperation for the carrying out of His programme.

"He has come to be thought of not as craving propitiation, nor worship, nor etiquette, nor anything else, for Himself personally, but only the whole-souled consecration of every one to the common task, the Cause of Man, which is the Cause of God.

"The individual believer, after the example of Jesus Christ, finds inexpressible satisfaction in the thought of the personal friendliness of God for him and the Divine interest in him. Above all the sense of union with the Heavenly Father in the common life-purpose nerves him to do his best for the advancement of the Cause, while leaving his own personal interests without anxiety in the safe-keeping of his Great Companion.

"This personal side of religion is purely a matter of individual choice, elective not compulsory. Whosoever will is free to taste and see that the Lord is good. If one feels no need or craving for this personal association it cannot conceivably be brought about by external compulsion.

"Since the modern conception of God regards

him as concerned pre-eminently with the social purpose, the advancement of man, this necessarily brings religion today into relation with the social life of man in all its phases, economic, political, industrial.

" It makes it that every socially disposed person is, in an essential sense, religious, whether he knows it or not.

" The personal side of religion is elective, entirely a private affair; the social side of religion is becoming more and more a matter of moral obligation imperative upon all."

So far we have considered the definitions formulated by professional theologians, and it may be well to include in our survey the definitions which have been formulated by laymen. In what he calls " a Naturalistic Definition of Religion," Mr. Rufus W. Weeks, a Socialist and an ex-president of the Actuarial Society of America, writes:

" In all stages of human evolution, past and present, man has apprehended invisible powers having dispositions toward himself; and has endeavored to please those powers. This endeavor has taken three forms: first, the use of symbolic acts and words to express the emotions of man toward those powers; second, the bringing about of behavior, personal and tribal, such as those powers are thought to desire; and, third, the dis-

cipline of individuals, by teaching and by self-culture, toward an interior state thought to be pleasing to those powers. This apprehension of superior powers, and the resulting effort to come into touch with them through worship, conduct and spiritual education are called Religion.

"If now we take into account only the stage of human evolution characteristic of the present, and ignore existing survivals of past stages, we may say that religion is the apprehension by man of one invisible power, felt to have benevolent dispositions toward man and to be worthy of reverence in the highest degree; and the resulting effort to attain harmony with that power through worship, through right conduct, personal and social, and through moral and spiritual education and self-discipline.

"Upon the highest plane of human evolution there has emerged the conviction that the only type of character and action which is in harmony with the will of the worshipped unseen power is that type of character and action which is animated by the passion for human welfare. This same passion for human welfare presents itself in some individuals as a self-supporting motive, bearing the strongest sanction though not depending on any feeling of an unseen benevolent power. There are all shades of mixture of the two motives; but,

as a rule, those who begin action for human welfare without any feeling of the presence of an unseen Ally, and who persevere in such action, sooner or later are visited by that feeling in greater or less degree. The devotion to human welfare, if at all tinged with the sense of a kindly unseen power, is undoubtedly to be included under the term religion, even where no ceremonial expression is found; and even where darkened by the absence of feeling of such a power, is fairly entitled to be considered a variant of religion."

Professor Simon N. Patten, whose *Social Basis of Religion* has been widely discussed, gives the following definition:

"Religion is an impulse and an interpretation. As an impulse, it is the feeling that beyond the visible world is a higher power planning for the uplift of humanity. As an interpretation, it recognizes a downward tendency among men and nations due to a gulf between God and man made by the passions and stubbornness of men. The latter is the basis of Theology, the former arouses zeal for a higher life.

"This view of religion assumes that naturally we would expect to find a pleasing advancing world and an optimistic view. But the prophets and religious teachers have found a decadent world and a declining civilization. The endeavor to har-

monize the facts and hopes has led to the orthodox formulæ, now so hard to accept since the world has again become progressive."

IV

A comparison of these several contemporary definitions of religion, from almost as many points of view, is interesting. In view of the unregulated usage of the term, and the differences which have divided Christendom and the religious world in general, candor compels the admission that the essential differences revealed by these definitions are relatively trivial, and the degree of unanimity quite remarkable. The Catholic apologist, the Jewish Rabbi, the Protestant teachers, the Socialist layman and the professional economist agree in principle and differ only in minor details. Surely, then, it is as possible as it is desirable to formulate such a definition of religion as will be generally acceptable to religious believers of all the creeds and schools of thought, a definition accurately and comprehensively descriptive of the essentials of religion, satisfying the religious devotee to that extent and comprehensible to the non-believer.

We may conclude that the two vital elements of religion are belief and conduct, man's view of the Universe and his behavior. In the monotheistic

religions the first of these elements, the philosophical, attributes the origin, maintenance and government of the Universe, including mankind, to an invisible Superior Being, Supreme Power or First Great Cause, called God, whom man regards with such emotions as awe, reverence, fear, love, trust or worship, the nature of the emotions varying in the different religions and in different stages of the evolution of each religion. In the polytheistic religions the origin, maintenance and government of the Universe, including mankind, are ascribed to various invisible beings, powers, forces or personalities called gods. As in the case of the God of the monotheistic religions, these gods are regarded with such emotions as awe, reverence, fear, love, trust or worship. In every religion, monotheistic and polytheistic, the second element, the ethical, springs from the conception of Deity and man's relation thereto which is the basis of the particular religion. That conduct is sanctioned and deemed to be good which is supposed to be pleasing to the God or gods believed in, and is therefore regarded as being harmonious with the Divine Will. That conduct is held to be evil and condemned which is supposed to be contrary to the Divine Will and out of harmony with it.

It might be objected that such a summary of religion must fail to give satisfaction because of

its insistence upon a belief in a God or gods and a Divine government of the Universe. It excludes the so-called "ethical," or non-theistic religions, notably Buddhism, Confucianism and Taouism. Some writers have vigorously protested against this limitation of the term religion. Thus, Brinton protests: "No mistake could be greater than to suppose that every creed must teach a belief in a God or Gods, in an immortal soul, and in the Divine government of the world. . . . The religion of today which counts the largest number of adherents, Buddhism, rejects every one of these items." [21]

It is doubtful whether anything but confusion can result from the broadening of the meaning of religion to embrace systems of thought which do not include the idea of God. At their best, when uncorrupted, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taouism are better described as ethical systems, or as philosophies, than as religions. In the case of the former, moreover, while Buddha himself taught no definite theories of God or immortality, his followers undoubtedly deified him after his death, making a god of Buddha himself.[22] In like man-

[21] *Religion of Primitive Peoples,* by D. G. Brinton, *American Lectures on the History of Religions for* 1896–1897, p. 28.

[22] See *Buddhism,* by Professor T. W. Rhys Davids and *The Gospel of Buddha,* by Dr. Paul Carus, for the best popular accounts of Buddha and his system.

ner, Taouism today is very different from the ethical system of Lao-Tze. It has been impregnated with superstition, as witness its magic and incantations, so foreign to the teaching of Lao-Tze. Like Buddha, moreover, Lao-Tze has been enthroned as a god and is worshipped as such.[23] Altogether, then, it would seem that religion without a God to worship is an anachronism.

We may briefly define religion, then, as *Man's belief in and worship of a supreme purposive Power (or powers) called God (or gods), and the regulation of his life according to what he believes to be the pleasure or desire, or the commands, of the God (or gods) worshipped.*

Because in this discussion we are practically concerned, principally at least, with the Judæo-Christian religions, we must consider especially the distinctive characteristics of these. We have no interest in the particular doctrines and ceremonials of the multitude of creeds and sects embraced in these great religions. Our sole concern is with the fundamental conceptions common to all the creeds and sects, which we may fairly regard as their cardinal religious principles. These are:

[23] See *Confucianism and Taouism*, by Professor R. K. Douglas, for a good popular account of these two systems and their founders.

(a) The belief in and worship of God, ruler of the Universe.

(b) The belief that man has a spiritual being, or soul, which is indestructible by death and immortal.

(c) The belief that man's highest good and happiness, both mortal and immortal, depend upon his living according to the ascertainable will and pleasure of God.

(d) The belief that, as the Brotherhood of Man is based on the Fatherhood of God, the highest social good can only be achieved by obedience to God's will.

Are these conceptions incompatible with the body of social and economic theories developed by Marx and his followers and known as "Marxism"? That is the question we are to investigate. But, first we must determine just what Marxism means.

CHAPTER III

THE ESSENTIALS OF "MARXISM"

I

As distinguished from the simple but far-reaching economic programme of Socialism, the term Marxism is usually applied either to a system of thought, a body of sociological and economic theories and generalizations, or to certain principles of action, the methods and tactics of the great Socialist movement. We might designate the two conceptions as theoretical Marxism and practical Marxism, respectively. In this study we are principally, if not exclusively, concerned with the former conception and only slightly, if at all, with the latter.

Theoretical Marxism may be said to rest upon two great theories and their necessary implications. The first of these theories is sociological, offering an explanation of the evolution of society; the second is economic, offering an explanation of the mechanism of capitalist society. The first is the well-known materialistic conception of history;

the second is the theory of surplus-value. Concerning these theories Friedrich Engels, Marx's great co-worker, has said: "These two great discoveries, the materialistic conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalistic production through surplus-value, we owe to Marx. With these discoveries Socialism became a science." [1]

These two doctrines comprise the essentials of Marxism. Fortunately, we are not under any obligation to pass judgment upon the validity of the doctrines. We need not weigh them. Our sole purpose is to state them explicitly and fairly, so that we may see whether the doctrines themselves, or any of their necessary implications, conflict with the essentials of religion as we have indicated them.

That various Socialist writers of eminence have declared the doctrines to be incompatible with belief in a God and in the Divine government of the Universe may be freely conceded. It is idle to dispute the fact, and it is equally idle to set against it the fact that other exponents of Socialism, not less eminent, have expressed a contrary view. The literature of the controversy upon this subject has heretofore been too largely devoted to textual warfare, the statement of one "authority"

[1] Engels, *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, § ii.

being met by the statement of another "authority" flatly contradicting the first.

The relation of the Marxian doctrines to religion is not to be determined by the failure or success of individuals on either side attempting to reconcile them. The only rational method is to set forth as comprehensively as possible the two sets of doctrines, with all their implications, and see whether belief in the one set of doctrines excludes the possibility of believing the other with equal sincerity, or whether they are unrelated.

To avoid unnecessary confusion later on, let us preface our examination of the materialistic conception of history by disassociating it completely from philosophical materialism, the doctrine that all phenomena may be traced back to the necessary movements of matter, or, to use the old formula of the materialists, that matter and its motions constitute the Universe. With this philosophy the historical materialism of Marx and Engels has no connection whatever, as will presently appear.

Marx was himself a materialist in philosophy, but it does not appear that he regarded the materialistic conception of history as a corollary of philosophical materialism. In at least one famous passage, in the first volume of *Das Kapital,* he

very clearly separates the two.[2] But even had Marx regarded his theory as a corollary of philosophical materialism it would have been quite proper to dispute the claim. Historical materialism is a theory of social evolution. It does not attempt to do more than explain the evolution of society. It does not offer any kind of answer to the great ultimate questions, Whence, Whither and Why, which religion and philosophical materialism, from their different standpoints, profess to answer. Historical materialism is simply the antithesis of historical idealism. The latter, which is the philosophy of the idealist, teaches that the material events and achievements of history spring from, and are to be explained by, spiritual or ideal facts and forces. The former philosophy teaches the opposite doctrine that spiritual or ideal facts and forces have their origin in material events and achievements. The strict accuracy of this description of the theory and its distinction from the philosophy of materialism will appear when the theory has been fully stated. Clearly, then, the theory is not open to the criticisms which apply to philosophical materialism, as suggested by Professor Ellwood, among others.[3]

[2] *Capital,* Vol. I, American (Kerr) edition, p. 406, note.
[3] *Marx's "Economic Determinism" in the Light of Modern*

Because of the confusion with philosophical materialism, which would seem to be an almost inevitable result of the name it bears, most Marxists of the present day apply to the theory some other name than the one which its founders, Marx and Engels, applied to it. The term "economic determinism" has been used by some eminent French and Italian disciples of Marx. But if the use of the word "materialistic" is objectionable because it leads to confusion with the materialism of natural science, which suggests a mechanical deterministic process, the use of the word "determinism" is not less objectionable. In popular usage, if without scientific sanction, the term suggests economic fatalism and a mechanical inevitability. More serious still is the objection that it exaggerates the theory and conveys the idea that economic influence is the sole determinant of the social evolutionary process, a claim which the authors of the theory never held and even specifically repudiated.

The foregoing reasons suffice to explain why the majority of modern Socialist writers prefer to designate the theory by the term, the economic interpretation of history, a term which we owe to the English economist, Thorold Rogers, who used

Psychology, by Charles A. Ellwood, *Amer. Jour. of Sociology,* Vol. XVII, No. 1, July, 1911, pp. 35–46.

it in a more restricted sense than is given to it in connection with the Marxian theory. How that theory was developed, and precisely what it is, we shall now proceed to investigate.

II

An astute contemporary critic of the Marxian theories, while acknowledging that the economic interpretation of history is an important theory, which "marked a great advance in historical methodology and social philosophy," says that "it is at the same time the crudest and most unfinished doctrine in the field of social philosophy." [4] The substantial justice of this criticism can hardly be denied.

In vain do we search the writings of Marx and Engels for an explicit, comprehensive and complete statement of the theory. Despite the cardinal importance of the theory it is indeed a thing of shreds and scraps and patches. Its authors never systematically developed it, but contented themselves with the statement of a few rather sweeping generalizations which from time to time were amplified or modified, especially by Engels after the death of his great associate. There is hardly another doctrine in the whole sphere of

[4] *Marxism Versus Socialism*, by Vladimir G. Simkhovitch, Ph. D., p. 13.

social philosophy, widely accepted and made the basis of a social creed, which has not been systematically developed, but left in a crude and chaotic state, enveloped in a mass of scattered, disjointed and often contradictory statements. It is a striking testimonial to the practical utility of the doctrine that it should have been so widely embraced and made the foundation of theoretical Socialism, in spite of the failure of its authors to formulate it with precision.

In order that we may understand the theory it will be necessary for us to trace its development. We must take the earliest intimations of the theory to be found in the writings of Marx and Engels and follow step by step the various amplifications and corrections which they made subsequently. Not a few of the critics of the theory have confined their attention to the earlier statements, completely ignoring the later qualifications. Obviously, their criticisms are directed against something either less or more than the authors of the theory believed.

The literary partnership of Marx and Engels began in 1845. The two men met for the first time in the autumn of 1844, but there had previously been some correspondence between them. In 1845 they published a criticism of the Young Hegelians, under the title *The Holy Family; or*

a Review of the Critical Critique Against Bruno Bauer and His Followers. Apparently Marx wrote nearly the entire work, the share of Engels, according to one of his own letters, being " about a sheet and a half out of the whole." We have the word of Engels that by that time, the early part of 1845, Marx had worked out the theory which both had been rapidly approaching for some years. In *The Holy Family* we find the first clear and emphatic reference to the theory. Marx points out that the French Revolution had an economic basis and ascribes the differences between the individual of classic antiquity and the individual of the French Revolution to the differences in their economic environments and relations, a practical application of the as yet unformulated theory. In another place he asks:

" Do these gentlemen think that they can understand the first word of history as long as they exclude the relations of man to nature, natural science and industry? Do they believe that they can actually comprehend any epoch without grasping the industry of the period, the immediate methods of production in actual life? . . . Just as they separate the soul from the body, and themselves from the world, so they find the birthplace of history not in the gross material production on

earth, but in the misty cloud formation of heaven." [5]

In the same year, 1845, Marx wrote some annotations to the work of Ludwig Feuerbach which are of interest not merely by reason of the fact that they are based upon the new theory, but also because in them Marx definitely repudiated the old mechanical materialistic philosophy which Feuerbach represented. The annotations have been published by Engels as an appendix to his well-known work on Feuerbach. Marx objects to the doctrine of materialism represented by Feuerbach, that men are simply the products of their environment, of their conditions and education, and insists that this environment may itself be altered by men. Fragmentary as these notes are, they are of vital importance to students of the theory as showing how, from the beginning, Marx disavowed economic fatalism, the mechanical deterministic process of philosophical materialism. There is no mistaking the clear and emphatic insistence that man is not wholly the creature of his environment, but is likewise superior to and master of his environment.[6]

[5] The translation is by Prof. E. R. A. Seligman and appears in his *Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 31.

[6] *Feuerbach, the Roots of the Socialist Philosophy*, by F. Engels, translated by Austin Lewis, Chicago, 1903, p. 130.

In the years 1846–47 Marx wrote a number of articles in which references to the new theory were made. For example, in criticizing the manner in which the Anti-Rent Riots were treated in a German communistic paper published in New York, Marx ridiculed the failure of the editor to recognize the intimate and inevitable connection between economic and political phenomena.[7] In an essay dealing with the so-called "True Socialists," Karl Grün and Moses Hess, he scornfully rails at their failure to recognize that changes in the methods of production bring about changes in the whole life of society.[8] In yet another essay he levels a very similar criticism at Karl Heinzen.[9]

In 1847 Marx published his famous critique of Proudhon, the *Misère de la Philosophie,* in which he gave a more careful and comprehensive exposition of his theory than he had done in any of his earlier writings. Mercilessly satirising Proudhon's concept of "eternal laws," Marx argues that social life at any given time is the result of economic evolution, and that changes in the meth-

[7] The substance of these articles, which appeared in the *Westfälischer Dampfboot* originally has been published in *Die Neue Zeit,* XIV (1896), 41–48.

[8] This essay, which also appeared originally in the *Westfälischer Dampfboot,* has been reprinted, with an introduction by Bernstein, in *Die Neue Zeit,* XVIII (1900), pp. 4, 37, 132, 164.

[9] This was published in the *Deutsche Brüssler Zeitung,* early in 1847.

ods of production involve changes in all social relations. He objects to the classical school of political economists because they fail to comprehend that economic institutions can only be understood as historical categories. The theory is fundamental to the whole work, and not merely the subject of incidental illusion, but the following paragraphs fairly summarise the argument:

"The social relations are intimately attached to the productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production, *and in changing their mode of production, their manner of gaining a living, they change all their social relations.* The windmill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam mill, society with the industrial capitalist.

"The same men who establish social relations conformably with their material productivity, *produce also the principles, the ideas, the categories, conformably with their social relations.*

"Thus these ideas, these categories, are not more eternal than the relations which they express. *They are historical and transitory products.*" [10]

In the famous *Communist Manifesto,* which appeared in February, 1848, its authors, Marx

[10] *The Poverty of Philosophy,* by Karl Marx, English translation by H. Quelch, London, 1900, p. 88. [Italics mine J. S.]

and Engels, make no direct, explicit statement of the doctrine of historical materialism, but it is clearly implied throughout the work. Forty years later, in 1888, in a preface to a new edition of the historic document, Engels wrote a remarkably lucid summary of its "fundamental proposition." Now, this summary, as a formulation of the theory, really belongs to a much later period than the one we are discussing. It was written after Marx's death and in the light of all the criticism to which the theory had been subjected. Nevertheless, the summary is so accurately descriptive of the doctrine implied throughout the *Manifesto* as to warrant this quotation from it:

". . . in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch."

In 1849 Marx published a series of articles in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. The text of the articles was made up of some lectures which Marx had delivered in Brussels in 1847. The series was never completed, owing to the suppression of the paper. The articles which appeared were subsequently published in pamphlet form, under

the title *Wage-Labor and Capital.* In one of them appears this explicit statement:

"In the process of production, human beings work not only upon nature, but also upon one another. They produce only by working together in a specified manner and reciprocally exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations to one another, and only within these social connections and relations does their influence upon nature operate, i. e., does production take place.

"These social relations between the producers, and the conditions under which they exchange their activities and share in the total act of production, will naturally vary according to the character of the means of production. With the discovery of a new instrument of warfare, the firearm, the whole internal organization of the army was necessarily altered, the relations within which individuals compose an army and can work as an army were transformed, and the relation of different armies to one another was likewise changed.

"We thus see that *the social relations within which individuals produce, the social relations of production, are altered, transformed, with the change and development of the material means of production, of the forces of production. The relations of production in their totality constitute*

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what is called the social relations, society, and, moreover, a society at a definite stage of historic development, a society with peculiar, distinctive character. Ancient society, feudal society, bourgeois (or capitalist) society, are such totalities of relations of production, each of which denotes a particular stage of development in the history of mankind." [11]

In 1850 Marx published, in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung,* a series of articles, entitled *1848–1849,* in which he made some interesting applications of his theory. He ascribed the French revolutionary uprising of February, 1848, to the commercial crisis of 1847. To the economic reaction of 1849 and 1850 he ascribed the political reaction of the period.[12] In 1852 he published his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,*[13] in which he extended the doctrine in a most important direction, tracing even the ideals and views of individuals to economic causes:

[11] *Wage-Labor and Capital,* by Karl Marx, New York, 1902, pp. 35–36. Italics mine.

[12] These articles have been many times republished in pamphlet form under the title, *The Class Struggles in France from 1848 to 1850.* The first edition, edited by Engels, appeared in 1895.

[13] Published first, in 1852, in *Die Revolution,* a monthly edited by Marx's friend, Joseph Weydemeyer, and published in New York. It was issued as a pamphlet by Marx in 1869, since when there have been numerous editions in many languages.

"Upon the several forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence, a whole superstructure is reared of various and peculiarly shaped feelings, illusions, habits of thought and conceptions of life. The whole class produces and shapes these out of its material foundation and out of the corresponding social conditions. The individual unit to whom they flow through tradition and education may fancy that they constitute the true reasons for the premises of his conduct. Although Orleanists and Legitimists, each of these factions, sought to make itself and the other believe that what kept the two apart was the attachment of each to its respective royal House, nevertheless, facts proved later that it rather was their divided interests that forbade the union of the two royal Houses. As, in private life, the distinction is made between what a man thinks of himself and says, and that which he really is and does, so, all the more, must the phrases and notions of parties in historic struggles be distinguished from their real organism, and their real interests, their notions and their reality." [14]

Throughout the whole of the articles which Marx contributed to the New York *Tribune* during the early fifties he applied his theory to the ex-

[14] *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* by Karl Marx, translated by Daniel De Leon, New York, 1898, p. 24.

amination and discussion of European politics. He continually takes the theory for granted and rarely makes explicit reference to it. But in the preface to his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* published in 1859, we find the most elaborate formulation of the theory to be found in all his writings:

"I was led by my studies to the conclusion that legal relations as well as forms of state could neither be understood by themselves, nor explained by the so-called general progress of the human mind, but that they are rooted in the material conditions of life, which are summed up by Hegel after the fashion of the English and French of the eighteenth century under the name 'civic society'; the anatomy of that civic society is to be found in political economy. The study of the latter which I had taken up in Paris, I continued at Brussels whither I immigrated on account of an order issued by Guizot. The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once reached, continued to serve as the leading thread in my studies, may be briefly summed up as follows: *In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these re-*

lations of production constitutes the economic structure of society — the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness." [15]

Having thus defined the theory, Marx proceeds to amplify it by explaining the interrelation of economic methods and institutions to social and political developments:

"At a certain stage of their development, the *material forces* of production in society come in conflict with the *existing relations* in production, or — what is but a legal expression for the same thing — with the property relations with which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In

[15] *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* by Karl Marx, translated from the second German edition by N. I. Stone, p. 11.

considering such transformations the distinction should always be made between the material transformations of the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, æsthetic or philosophic — in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of the conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must rather be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the material forces of production and the relations of production. No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it, have been developed; and new higher relations of productions never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of old society. Therefore, mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve: since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution exist or are at least in the process of formation." [16]

One might naturally expect to find the theory

[16] *Idem*, pp. 12–13.

which Marx himself regarded as the foundation of all his work explicitly stated in the first volume of *Das Kapital,* which appeared in 1867. But whoever turns to the book with that expectation will be disappointed. While it is fundamental to the whole conception of the book, and implied throughout, beginning with the very first paragraph, the theory is nowhere explicitly set forth in clear and comprehensive terms. The one specific reference to it is extremely important, however. In it Marx asserts that the history of religion must be studied from the standpoint of historical materialism, which he sharply distinguishes from "the abstract materialism of natural science":

"A critical history of technology would show how little any of the inventions of the eighteenth century are the work of a single individual. Hitherto there has been no such book. Darwin has interested us in the history of Nature's technology, i. e., in the formation of the organs of plants and animals, which organs serve as instruments of production for sustaining life. Does not the history of the productive organs of man, of organs that are the material basis of all social organization, deserve equal attention? And would not such a history be easier to compile, since, as Vico says, human history differs from natural history in this, that we have made the former, but not the latter?

Technology discloses man's mode of dealing with Nature,— the process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation of his social relations, *and of the mental conceptions that flow from them.* Every history of religion, even, that fails to take account of this material basis, is uncritical. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion than it is, conversely, to develop from the actual relations of life the corresponding celestialized forms of those relations. The latter is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific method. *The weak points in the abstract materialism of natural science, a materialism that excludes history and its process, are at once evident from the abstract and ideological conceptions of its spokesmen, whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their own specialty."* [17]

In the third volume of his monumental work, which was never finished, but was edited and published in an incomplete state by Engels in 1894, there are numerous interesting applications of the theory. For our present purpose these applications of the theory are less important than the definite statement of the theory itself, qualified in im-

[17] *Capital,* Vol. I, American (Kerr) edition, p. 406, note. Italics mine.

portant particulars and admitting the influence of other factors:

"It is always the direct relation of the owners of the conditions of production to the direct producers, which reveals the innermost secret, the hidden foundation of the entire social construction, and with it of the political form of the relations between sovereignty and dependence, in short, of the corresponding form of the state. The form of this relation between rulers and ruled naturally corresponds always with a definite stage in the development of the methods of labor and of its productive social power. *This does not prevent the same economic basis from showing infinite variations and gradations in its appearance, even though its principal conditions are everywhere the same. This is due to innumerable outside circumstances, natural environment, race peculiarities, outside historical influences, and so forth, all of which must be ascertained by careful analysis.*" [18]

III

We have already noted that after the death of Marx the statement of the doctrine of the economic interpretation of history was refined and modified by Engels.[19] We cannot base our judgment of

[18] *Capital*, Vol. III, translated by Ernest Untermann, p. 919.
[19] Page 40.

the theory upon any statement which does not include these refinements. Whether or not we believe that Marx, if alive, would have assented to the qualifications which Engels introduced into the statement of the theory, notably in the letter on the subject which he wrote from 1890 to 1894, is altogether irrelevant. True, Engels specifically claims to speak for Marx as well as for himself, and his authority and veracity are scarcely impeachable. But even if it were otherwise, and we believed that Engels introduced into the doctrine elements which Marx would have rejected, it would be none the less necessary to base our criticism and our judgment upon the later statement. For the acknowledged exponents of Socialist thought everywhere have accepted the Engels version of the theory, and in that form, and no other, it has become the cornerstone of the Socialist philosophy.

In his crushing refutation of Herr Dühring, published in 1878, Engels, more clearly than had been done before emphasized the struggle of antagonistic economic classes as a vital part of the doctrine of the economic interpretation of history. In the preface which he wrote for a new edition of the *Communist Manifesto,* in 1888, he made it still more clear. Moreover, he specifically exempted from the law of progression through class conflict prehistoric society which knew no private

property in land. This statement of the theory is better known and more quoted than any other:

"The *Manifesto,* being our joint production, I consider myself bound to state that the fundamental proposition which forms its nucleus belongs to Marx. That proposition is: that in every *historical epoch,* the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, *and the social organization necessarily following from it,* form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (*since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership*) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles form a series of evolution in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class — the proletariat — cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class — the bourgeoisie — without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class-distinctions and class-struggles." [20]

[20] Preface to English translation of the *Communist Manifesto,* 1888. Italics mine.

Many of the severest criticisms of the theory have depended for their validity and force upon a much narrower conception of the economic factor than either Marx or Engels ever held. It is true that Marx declared that " the mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life," [21] and that many similar passages can be cited to bolster up the position of those who insist upon the strictest and narrowest interpretation of the economic factor.[22] But the context of these passages would suffice, even if there were not an abundance of other textual evidence, to prove that Marx and Engels based their theory upon a much broader conception of the economic factor. Thus, the context of the passage just cited shows that the mode of production, meaning thereby the technical process of production, was not of itself regarded as the factor conditioning social development. It is specifically stated that, " In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable " and " the sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real founda-

[21] Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.*

[22] Cf. Ellwood, *Marx's "Economic Determinism" in the Light of Modern Psychology, Amer. Jour. of Sociology,* Vol. XVII, No. 1, July, 1911, p. 36.

tion, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness." Thus, it is not merely the technique of production, but the technique of commerce, of industrial relations, and so on.

Not merely so, but due account is to be taken of such physical factors as fertility of the soil, climate, and even race itself. In one of the letters which Engels wrote on the subject in 1894, and which was published after his death, he insists that we must broaden our conception of the economic factor so as to include among the economic conditions, not only the geographical basis, but the actually transmitted remains of former economic changes, which have often survived only through tradition, or *vis inertiæ,* as well as the whole external environment of this particular form. Even race itself is declared to be an economic factor. Moreover, he admits that the political, legal, religious, literary and artistic development, while resting upon the economic, all react upon one another and upon the economic foundation itself. "It is not that the economic situation is the cause, in the sense of being the only active agent, and that everything else is only a passive result. It is, on the contrary, a case of mutual action on the basis of the economic necessity,

which in last instance always works itself out." [23]

In another letter, written in 1890 to a student, and first published in 1895, Engels wrote: "Marx and I are partly responsible for the fact that the younger men have sometimes laid more stress on the economic side than it deserves. In meeting the attacks of our opponents it was necessary for us to emphasize the dominant principle, denied by them; and we did not always have the time, place or opportunity *to let the other factors, which were concerned in the mutual action and reaction, get their deserts.*" Clearly, Engels is far from claiming that all social life is to be interpreted in terms of economics. Still less does he abstract the economic from all other phases of the social life process and treat it as a thing apart.[24] On the contrary, he emphasizes here, as in the letter previously quoted, their interdependence, their mutual action and reaction, which, he insists, takes place upon the basis of economic necessity," *which in last instance always works itself out.*"

In yet another letter Engels still further emphasized the important rôle of other factors than the economic in the process of social evolution:

[23] Quoted by Seligman, *The Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 64, from *Der Sozialistische Akademiker.* I am indebted to Prof. Seligman's work for the entire paragraph summarising the letter of Engels.

[24] Ellwood, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

"According to the materialistic view of history the factor which is *in last instance* decisive in history is the production and reproduction of actual life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. But when any one distorts this so as to read that the economic factor is the sole element, he converts the statement into a meaningless, abstract, absurd phrase. The economic condition is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure — the political forms of the class contests, and their results, the constitutions — the legal forms, *and also the reflexes of these actual contests in the brains of the participants, the political, legal, philosophical theories, the religious views.* . . . all these exert an influence on the development of the historical struggles, and in many instances *determine their form.*[25]

In another letter on the same subject Engels described as "not only pedantic but ridiculous" the view that every fact of history can be explained on economic grounds. He points out that political conditions and national traditions often play an important rôle. It is foolish, for instance, to say that of all the German states Brandenburg should have been selected to become the great power of the future solely because of economic considerations. To claim that every petty Ger-

[25] Quoted by Seligman, *op. cit.* pp. 142–143. Italics mine.

man principality was destined to live or die for economic reasons alone, would be as absurd as to ascribe the difference between the various German dialects solely to economic causes.[26]

The theory thus presented by Engels is very different from the doctrine advanced by that eminent Marxist, the late Paul Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, who argued that the sole determinant of human progress is economic development.[27] Engels does not present the theory as a theory of absolute economic determinism at all. At most it is a theory of the predominating influence of economic factors in social evolution.

But while Engels has removed some of the difficulties arising from the extreme exaggerations of the theory it cannot be said that he has materially lessened those which are due to the lack of systematic formulation and careful elaboration. What evidence is there that the basis of economic necessity "in last instance always works itself out"? And just what is meant by the reaction of political, legal and philosophical theories, and religious views, upon the economic basis? Do they exert fundamental, determining influences, or are the influences merely superficial and modifying? Does

[26] Seligman, *op. cit.*, pp. 144–145.

[27] *Le Déterminisme Économique le Karl Marx*, par Paul Lafargue, Paris, 1909.

not the admission that these other forces react upon the economic basis, to the extent, in some instances, of determining the forms of historical struggles, lead directly to the conclusion that there cannot be any satisfactory interpretation of history in terms of economic conditions or methods alone?[28] To these and other similar questions no answer need here be attempted. Our task is to strip the doctrine of its excrescences and to ascertain exactly what it is and what its implications are.

IV

To sum up: Historical materialism is the theory or doctrine that the methods of production, distribution and exchange, and all the institutions and social relations which these involve, together with such physical factors as race, climate, geographical position and fertility of soil, constitute the economic environment which is the predominant factor in social evolution. As the basis of the entire superstructure of society, this economic environment is the principal, but not the exclusive, determinant force in the evolution of political in-

[28] These pages were already written when my friend, Mr. W. J. Ghent, a Marxian expositor and commentator of note, published *(New York Call,* December 13, 1914) a criticism of the doctrine of the economic interpretation of history, pleading for a better and more scientific formulation of the doctrine.

stitutions, laws, ethics, philosophy, æsthetics, and even of religious conceptions.

But in accordance with the great law of natural causality, that every effect is the resultant of various concurrent causes and not of any one single cause, and that every effect becomes in turn a cause of other phenomena, it is a necessary part of the theory that the various results of the economic environment in the form of political institutions, laws, ethical codes, philosophical theories, æsthetic ideas, religious views, and so on, become active causes, reacting upon one another and upon the economic environment which produced them, functioning as co-determinants of social evolution. Because these co-determinants can only function within the limits of the economic environment, and are, therefore, subject to it, they must be regarded as secondary and subordinate factors.

Conflicting economic interests inherent in the social relations consequent upon the methods of production, distribution and exchange become the basis of class antagonisms and class conflicts. Economic impulses are developed — different in each class — which shape the thoughts, ideals, ethical conceptions and political and social actions of the classes. The sum total of these conceptions constitutes the *consciousness* of the class, which the individuals comprising that class share, and by

which their conduct is in general governed. But economic impulses are not the sole determinants of the intellectual and moral conceptions and conduct of economic classes or the individuals comprising them. Racial traditions, ethical conceptions, philosophical and religious views, and other resultants of the economic environment, become important co-determinants of both consciousness and conduct, sometimes exercising greater power than the economic impulses. Thus we find that individuals frequently rise above their material interests and act otherwise than their economic impulses direct. The same is true of families and larger social groups, sometimes even of whole classes and of nations.[29] In general, however, the functioning of motives and impulses other than the economic is limited by the economic environment and are subordinate to it.

As a necessary consequence of the foregoing it follows that the evolution of society in general,

[29] Professor O. D. Skelton commits a grotesquely stupid error when he says: "Clearly Marx recognizes the existence of ideal or rather ideological motives, but recognizes them only as the intermediate outcome of material class interest and as *invariably impelling the actor in the direction which that material interest determines.*" (*Skeleton, Socialism, A Critical Analysis,* p. 110.) Marx paid too many tributes to individual idealism, to men and groups pursuing ideals in defiance of their economic interest — as Marx himself did, by the way — to afford Professor Skelton the slightest excuse for the statement quoted.

its political institutions, its laws, its ethics, its philosophical views and its religions, together with the struggles and conflicting mental and moral conceptions of the classes, cannot be comprehended apart from the economic environment, the matrix within which these phenomena are developed. Not being the sole factor, the economic basis alone does not furnish a complete and exclusive interpretation of history — for which a synthesis of all the determinant factors would be necessary — but, as the main efficient determinant factor, it furnishes the most useful key to the understanding of the phenomena of history. So considered, the theory, as a working hypothesis, is of inestimable value to the sociologist.

V

Perhaps no Socialist theory has been more generally misinterpreted, or more bitterly assailed, than the theory of class conflicts. Strictly speaking, it is not a self-contained theory at all, but simply part and parcel of the theory of historical materialism, the economic interpretation of history. It is a vitally important part of that theory and explains the manner in which great changes in the social structure are wrought under the urge of economic forces. It deals with the mechanics of

social development as distinguished from its dynamics.

In the classic statement by Engels, already quoted,[30] the whole matter is very lucidly and concisely stated: "The whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes."

Now, Marx and Engels were by no means the first to perceive not only that the record of class struggles is an important part of the history of mankind, but, what is vastly more important, that through class conflict the greatest social changes have been wrought. Professor Simkhovitich has rendered a distinct service to all students of the subject by his exposition of the extent to which this conception of history was held prior to the advent of Marx and Engels.[31] Even the Socialist predecessors of Marx and Engels acknowledged the existence of class struggles, past and present, but they almost invariably regarded the fact with horror, and utterly failed to see in class conflict the inevitable outcome of economic development and the equally inevitable way of accomplishing decisive

[30] See p. 57.

[31] V. G. Simkhovitch, *Marxism Versus Socialism*, Chapter viii.

and far-reaching social changes. To have perceived this, and to have pointed to the proletarian struggle against the capitalist class as the sure and certain preparation of a new social order, to have made that the basis of the Socialist propaganda, so that henceforth Socialism was to be a proletarian movement, is the distinctive merit of Marx and Engels.

The class struggle, then, is not the wicked invention of Karl Marx. Class struggles are not "made," though methods and weapons employed in the struggles may be. The common idea that social harmony would prevail were it not for the "agitators" is extremely silly. All that agitators can do is to point to the existence of the struggle and to become spokesmen for one side or the other. The struggle itself is inherent in the economic basis of society, as Madison pointed out a hundred and thirty years ago.[32] And because class struggles are the inevitable outcome of the economic system prevailing at the time, it follows that important changes in the economic system give rise to corresponding changes in the class struggle. Each historical epoch, having its own characteristic economic system, needs must have its own peculiar form of class conflict and may be characterized by it. The prevailing economic system of today is

[32] In the *Federalist*, No. X.

based upon wage-paid labor, involving the relations of employer and employed, and the characteristic class struggle of our time is necessarily that between the wage-earning class and the capitalist, or wage-paying class.

It is not contended that these two classes include the whole of society, that a horizontal division of society can be made, all above being capitalists and all below being proletarians. Nor does it mean that there can be no other class conflict than that between the two classes named. There are, for example, struggles within each of these classes. There are also struggles by other classes. But the dominant and characteristic struggle of the capitalist epoch is that between the proletariat and the capitalist class. Nor is class hatred a part of the theory. The worker who is conscious of the class struggle is bound to see that the individual capitalist is no more responsible for conditions than himself. His hatred will be directed against the system, rather than against the individual capitalist. The conception of the class struggle has always been a strong deterrent of violence against individuals and the doctrine has long been held in contempt by the Anarchists, because it discourages the idea of personal attack.[33]

[33] For a fuller discussion of the ethics of the theory, see the chapter on "The Moral Value of Class Consciousness" in my *Substance of Socialism.*

Finally, it is no part of the theory that the conflicting classes can have no interests in common with each other and with society at large. True, in Socialist speeches and pamphlets one frequently encounters the statement that capitalists and workers can have no interests in common, but it is simply a bit of absurd rhetoric. Employers and employed not only hold that special relation toward each other, but they are citizens likewise, holding quite other relations toward each other and toward society, having common interests which may, and in fact often do, entirely overshadow their class interests. As Kautsky reminds us, the whole is greater than its parts and the common interest frequently outweighs class interest. One may deny the solidarity of classes and yet recognize the solidarity of mankind.[34]

The national solidarity shown in the various industrial nations of Europe at the outbreak of the great war, in 1914, splendidly illustrates the manner in which national interests, patriotism, obliterate class interests.

It can hardly be claimed, therefore, that history is nothing but a record of class struggles, and that class struggles constitute the whole of history.

[34] Cf. *Neue Zeit,* Jahr. XXI, Vol. ii, (1903) pp. 266–274. I have argued this point at some length in my *Socialism: a Summary and Interpretation of Socialist Principles,* pp. 157–159, and my *Substance of Socialism,* pp. 120–122.

Marx and Engels can hardly have meant that, even though the declaration that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" bears that interpretation. Numerous examples of great historical developments which were in no sense the outcome of class struggles might be cited. Achille Loria made a study of nearly three hundred wars and showed that the vast majority of them were due to economic causes, principally to trade monopolies, but no one has ever shown that class conflict is a common cause of international wars. Certainly, the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–71 can hardly be ascribed to the struggle of hostile classes, nor can it be said that conflicting class interests were responsible for liberating the dogs of war in the month of August, 1914, and bringing about the greatest war of all ages. The fear and hatred of the Slav by the Teuton had nothing to do with class conflict. The motive of history is not always class struggle.[35]

But when we put aside all exaggerations of the theory, the fact remains that class struggles have existed ever since the establishment of private property, exercising a profound influence upon history. So much cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that present society is torn by a keen struggle between the wage-paying and wage-re-

[35] Cf. Kautsky, *Die historische Leistung von Karl Marx*, p. 11.

ceiving classes, and that that struggle tends more and more to shape our destiny, influencing not only our laws, but our very consciousness, including our ethical perceptions. Will the proletariat, if it succeeds, merely overthrow the capitalist class and become itself the ruling class? Not if the Socialists rightly interpret the economic situation. It is an essential part of the theory that the proletariat can only emancipate itself from the control and exploitation of the capitalist class by doing away with the power to exploit, and thereby making any kind of class rule impossible. As Marx puts it, the proletariat by its victory over the capitalist class ceases itself to be a class.

VI

A very brief description of the theory of surplus-value will serve to bring to a close this summary of the Marxian synthesis. By means of his surplus-value theory Marx traced rent, interest and profit to the exploitation of labor made possible by the ownership and control by the exploiting class of the means of production. The theory is, therefore, an explanation of the manner in which capitalist income is derived.

Normally, the wage-earner receives in wages less value than he creates. That is to say, his wages are equivalent in value to a part of his prod-

uct only, not the whole of it. This does not mean that the wage-earner is a philanthropist. He surrenders this greater sum of values because he must. If he possessed and controlled all the necessary tools, materials and facilities for carrying on his trade, so that he was not dependent upon an employer, he would not be content to work for wages, or to receive less than the whole of the values he created. Instead of getting only a part of the value produced he would get the whole of it. But the laborer does not own the means of production. That is compatible only with production by hand upon a small scale. It is utterly incompatible with machine production on a large scale. In the course of industrial evolution the laborer has been divorced from the ownership of the essentials of his calling. Hence he becomes a wage-earner.

As a wage-earner the laborer sells his only commodity, namely, his skill or labor-power. He sells this to the capitalist at its market-price, its exchange value, and henceforth it belongs to the purchaser, like any other commodity. Now, the capitalist buys the worker's labor-power in order that he may use it in the production of other commodities, or wares. Just as raw material is used up in the manufacture of commodities, so labor-power is bought to be used up in the same way and to the same end. The capitalist buys the labor-power of

the worker for a period of ten hours, let us say. Now, it may well happen that in five hours the worker will have produced value equal to that which the employer has paid, or agreed to pay, for the labor-power of ten hours. Does the worker then cease working, on the ground that he has produced values equal to his wages? Not at all. He goes on working for another five hours, the whole product of which period represents a gain to the capitalist. This balance is the surplus-value, the acquisition of which is the objective of the capitalist.

This surplus-value is the source of capitalist income. It is the pivot of the economic system of capitalist society. The difference between the product of labor and the wages of labor is the surplus-value from which all rent, all interest and all profit is derived. The class struggle between the wage-earners and the capitalists is the inevitable result of the mode of exploitation here disclosed. The capitalists naturally want to raise the amount of surplus-value, while the workers as naturally want to lower it.

Contrary to a very general impression, there is no ethical element in the theory. No condemnation of the capitalists for making surplus-value their source of income is implied. In the Marxian system there is no ethical argument for a new sys-

tem of distribution. Nowhere do we find the argument that what the workers have produced they *ought* to own. The fact that in the actual struggle the workers resort to this argument may perhaps be taken as an evidence that in this particular the Marxian system is weak. The present writer is among those who so believe, and who feel that the strict Marxian argument needs to be enforced by the ethical argument. But, be that how it may, the fact remains that there is no ethical element in the Marxian theory.

We have now covered with sufficient detail for our purpose the sociological synthesis called "Marxism." The economic interpretation of history, the doctrine of class struggles and the theory of surplus-value are now seen to be three component parts of one great whole, not three separate and distinct theories. What relation, if any, this synthesis bears to the essentials of religion we are now in a fair position to inquire.

LATIVE LI

CHAPTER IV

RELIGION AND MARXISM

I

RELIGION begins with a philosophy. Its philosophical foundation is an explanation of the Universe. It attempts to interpret the phenomena of life. By means of a supreme intelligence, an ultimate purposive power, it seeks to account for the world and all that it contains. It is " an hypothesis which is supposed to render the Universe comprehensible." [1]

This hypothesis is not the final goal of religion, but its beginning. It is the basis upon which is reared the religious consciousness, the conception of man's practical relations to the Supreme Being. Herein lies an important distinction between philosophy and religion. Speculative thought concerning the origin and meaning of life leads to the acceptance of certain theories as explanations. That is philosophy. But religion involves something more. Unlike philosophy, it is not content to explain the great challenging mystery of the

[1] Spencer, *First Principles*, p. 43.

origin and direction of the Universe. So much is, indeed, a necessary element of religion, and no religion is possible apart from some such explanation. But something else is necessary. When the explanation awakens a consciousness of a practical relation to the great First Cause, the Supreme Intelligence, from which consciousness emanate emotions, desires and ideals which exert a regulative influence upon conduct, then, and then only, can religion be properly differentiated from the philosophy of religion.

Philosophical materialism offers an interpretation of the Universe, a mechanistic explanation of the phenomena of life. It substitutes another hypothesis for that which is the philosophical basis of religion. It accounts differently for man's being and rejects the religious idea of his destiny. Unless we are to rob the terms of all definite meaning, religion and materialism must be regarded as irreconcilable. Furthermore, if the Marxian doctrine of historical materialism is a part of the philosophy of materialism, or a necessary implication of it, religion and Marxism must be regarded as antagonistic and irreconcilable.

II

But the Marxian theory is not concerned, even remotely, with the problems which form the sub-

ject matter of the philosophy of religion and of materialism. It offers no hypothesis to account for the Universe; it has no explanation of the origin of life to satisfy the inquiring spirit; it neither affirms nor denies the existence of God, or of immortality. Acceptance of the materialistic hypothesis does not logically involve the acceptance of the Marxian doctrine, nor does the acceptance of the religious hypothesis logically involve the rejection of the Marxian doctrine.

Religion is intimately and vitally concerned with problems and phenomena far anterior to those with which the historical materialism of the Marxian synthesis has to do. It must begin at the beginning of all things and account for the existence of the Universe and of mankind. The Marxian theory, on the other hand, simply takes the Universe and mankind for granted. They are facts to be accepted, not problems to be explored or mysteries to be revealed. It does not ask how they came to exist. Nor does it take as its starting point any particular solution to that problem which might involve a conflict with some other solution or its necessary implications. It is quite impossible, therefore, to discover in the doctrine of historical materialism any essential antagonism to the belief in a Supreme Being which is the heart of all religion.

It is part of the very essence of religion that the Supreme Being called God is something more than the Creator of all things, Author of the Universe, the Great First Cause. These terms all relate to the past, to power exercised, to functions performed. They do not imply present power or activity. They might all be applied to a Being or Force once powerful but no longer existing. But religion conceives God as an Infinite and Eternal Being, a present, living Power ruling the Universe. It assumes design in the Universe and intelligent purpose in its direction. Behind all that we call "natural law" religion perceives the working of the Divine Mind and Will.

We must not confuse this conception of God with the grotesque perversions which have sometimes obtained credence. Men have attributed to the Divine Will every impressive event, regardless of the fact that they thus made God appear selfish, fickle, irrational and cruel. There is no disaster, no crime, no outrage upon humanity of which mistaken piety has not murmured "It is God's will — let His will be done." When famine has depopulated whole provinces, when war has reddened the earth with blood, when pestilence has swept through great cities like a devouring flame and when earthquake shocks have hurled human beings to death by the thousand, the pietists have said

that God willed it so. Murder, suicide, insanity, blindness, shipwreck and every other calamity has been so received. But these tragic perversions are nothing more than the sorry excrescences which superstition has imposed upon religion, and which we must disregard. The religious thinkers of today conceive God as ruling the Universe through law, constant and not capricious.

No thoughtful religious believer nowadays considers that the belief that the world is governed by natural laws is equivalent to a denial of the existence of God. Yet that was the fear which prompted the religious world of the middle of the nineteenth century to assail the theory of evolution and to declare it to be incompatible with a belief in God. Evolution is not rejected by the religious thought of today. It has not displaced belief in God, as was feared, but God is now conceived of as working through evolution. Physical laws are His laws for the direction of the Universe. God is no longer believed to rule the Universe by arbitrary methods, changing from day to day, but rather by means of permanent and immutable principles and laws. The discovery of these principles and laws is the function of science.

III

The theory of evolution by means of natural selection and the survival of the fittest is quite compatible with a profound and reverent belief in God as Creator and Ruler of the Universe. The foremost leaders of religious thought in every country have accepted the theory. They have regarded the laws of evolution as of Divine origin, as means whereby the Divine purpose is achieved. In each step of the evolutionary process, from the lowest form of life to the highest, these religious minds have seen God at work directing all life in accordance with His will. In this there is no compromise of any kind, either conscious or sub-conscious. The fact is that the theory of evolution by means of natural selection and the survival of the fittest not only leaves room for belief in a Supreme Being, but even invites that belief because it offers no solution to the problem of the Great First Cause. When one accepts the evolutionary hypothesis the questions Whence? Why? and Whither? remain to be answered. What force set the evolutionary process in motion? How is it directed? The whole process of evolution is so complex, so wonderful, persisting through countless ages, that to many thoughtful minds belief in the evolutionary hypothesis makes belief in God imperative. It is

impossible for such minds to doubt that through it all

> One unceasing purpose runs,

and that behind the intricate processes of evolution a great, directing intelligence is patiently working.

> A firemist and a planet,
> A crystal and a cell,
> A jellyfish and a saurian,
> And caves where the cave men dwell;
> Then a sense of law and beauty,
> And a face turned from the clod,—
> Some call it Evolution,
> And others call it God.[2]

Undoubtedly, the theory of evolution can be accepted by those who reject the idea of a Divine government of the Universe, and of a Supreme Being working through evolution. The theory may be so interpreted as to exclude the possibility of belief in God. It has in point of fact been so interpreted many times. It has been held by some that the theory must ultimately lead to the belief that all life is the result of chance, of "a fortuitous concourse of atoms," that there is no governing intelligence in the Universe and that immor-

[2] W. H. Carruth.

tality is impossible. But these conclusions are not inherent in the theory. They are imposed upon it by the individuals who have added to the theory their speculations upon matters with which the theory is not legitimately concerned. In this they have done neither more nor less than those who have imposed their religious belief upon the theory. Strictly delimited, the theory itself offers no answer to the great ultimate questions which religion and philosophical materialism both attempt to answer, the first with its conception of an Infinite Mind ruling the Universe, the second with its conception of a mechanistic determinism.

IV

The Marxian theory of the economic interpretation of history has frequently been compared to the theory of evolution through natural selection and the survival of the fittest. Engels, for example, claimed that the Marxian theory was "destined to do for history what Darwin's theory has done for biology." [3] Many of his disciples have proclaimed Marx to be the "Darwin of sociology." The claim is that, just as Darwin with his theory of natural selection revealed the mechanism of organic evolution, so Marx with his material-

[3] Preface to *Communist Manifesto* (English edition of 1888).

istic conception of history revealed the mechanism of social evolution. It is quite natural and eminently fitting that we should apply to the Marxian theory the same test as that which we have applied to the theory of evolution itself.

Belief in a Divine government of the Universe involves, as a corollary, the belief that the process of social evolution is ordered, directed and controlled by God. It is impossible to separate the two. It follows, therefore, that if there is anything in the Marxian theory which denies a place to God, which makes it necessary to believe that in human evolution there is no "unceasing purpose," no ordered plan or governing intelligence, its rejection becomes an essential condition of religious faith. That conclusion is inevitable. Moreover, if it is claimed that the *sole* determining factor in social evolution is economic, that spiritual forces, including religion and ethics, never exert any influence upon the social process except in a secondary way as reflecting material forces, religion must reject the claim. Such a theory strikes at the very heart of religion. If its validity could be established there would be no reason for any religious propaganda or fellowship whatsoever.

That the Marxian theory has been so interpreted as to make its acceptance by a sincere religious believer impossible cannot be denied.

Some of Marx's disciples, notably Paul Lafargue [4] and Achille Loria,[5] have interpreted the theory as one of the rigid economic determinism, denying the influence of all spiritual and idealistic factors, except in a secondary way as reflexes of material conditions. Writers like Bax [6] and Leatham [7] have very definitely asserted that the theory is not compatible with the belief that social evolution is directed and controlled by a Divine intelligence. Statements to the same general effect frequently appear in the Socialist press.[8] The correspondence columns of the Socialist press are often used to assail religion.

But, as we have seen, the doctrine which Marx and Engels formulated and taught does not attribute to economic and material factors exclusive power to influence social evolution and social conditions. It does not exclude ethics, religion, philosophy and other factors, but acknowledges that they may be active co-determinants of the social process, and that they may exert an important influence upon the economic and material factors.

[4] Lafargue, *Le Determinisme Economique De Karl Marx.*

[5] Loria, *Economic Foundations of Society.*

[6] Bax, *The Religion of Socialism.*

[7] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?*

[8] For example, The New York *Call* declared, in its issue of March 2, 1911: "The theory of economic determinism alone, if thoroughly grasped, leaves no room for a belief in the supernatural."

And, just as the conception of organic evolution as a theory which rendered God unnecessary and belief in His existence impossible has been outgrown, so that the idea that God rules the Universe and fulfills His purpose through the laws of evolution is now universally respected and admitted to be compatible with the theory of evolution, so the Marxian theory is now generally acknowledged to be compatible with a sincere belief that God guides the evolution of society. In the same way that the conception of evolution, which forced men to content themselves with the idea that life began with "a fortuitous concourse of atoms" has ceased to hold absolute sway, so has the conception of the economic interpretation of history which implied the absence of a governing intelligence and purpose.

That the newer and more liberal conception is the more rational and scientific can be readily demonstrated. We need only to take any great historical epoch or event in which the operation of material and economic factors as primary and original causes can be discerned and to subject those causal factors to a simple test. For example: It is clearly enough seen that the series of great mechanical inventions which marked the close of the eighteenth century, the work of Hargreaves, Arkwright, Cartwright, Watt, and others,

initiated an economic revolution which involved the most profound and far-reaching social, political, intellectual and moral consequences. No one would think of attempting to interpret the history of England and Europe in the century which followed without reference to those great inventions. England's colonial expansion and her foreign relations were directly determined by that economic revolution. From that marvellous galaxy of brilliant inventions sprang a revolution, not only in industry and commerce, but likewise in politics, in jurisprudence, in philosophy, in ethics, and even in religion.

So much must be admitted by the most implacable opponents of the Marxian theory of history. And so much is all that the theory involves. But if at this point some one attempts to interpret the phenomena of the industrial revolution and claims that a great purpose is discernible, the theory is silent. It neither affirms the interpretation nor implies a different interpretation. It neither accepts the claim advanced nor denies it. It is quite compatible with an intelligent and unreserved acceptance of the theory to believe that an Infinite Intelligence guided all the inventors, that Hargreaves invented the " spinning jenny," Cartwright the power loom and Watt the steam engine, under Divine inspiration and guidance, and that God used

them to further a design older than the world itself. Such an interpretation of the Marxian theory is entirely possible and does not require any intellectual compromise whatsoever.

To sum up this phase of our discussion: The Marxian theory of historical materialism deals only with observed forces and tendencies in social evolution. It has nothing to do with those ultimate problems which lie beyond the realms of science and belong peculiarly to the realm of philosophy and religion. It neither explicitly nor implicitly denies that social evolution is subject to Divine direction and control. It does not deny that other than material and economic factors, particularly ethics and religion, exert direct and independent influence upon the rate, manner and direction of the social evolutionary process.

V

At the outset of this discussion we emphasized the important fact that Socialism as a living movement does not depend upon the Marxian synthesis. Each generalization and theory in that synthesis might be overthrown and Socialism remain a vital challenging force. It is equally necessary to emphasize the fact that the Marxian doctrine of historical materialism does not of necessity lead to the conclusion that the Socialist programme is either

inevitable, practical or desirable. It is quite possible for one to accept the doctrine while rejecting and opposing Socialism.

The essentials of the doctrine have been lucidly and ably expounded and defended by a noted Roman Catholic writer whose work bears the *Nihil Obstat* of the ecclesiastical censor and the *Imprimatur* of the Very Reverend Archbishop John M. Farley, since elevated to the rank of cardinal. The writer is the Reverend J. A. Dewe, and his work is entitled *History of Economics, or Economics as a Factor in the Making of History.* The following passage is thoroughly typical of Father Dewe's work:

" It is evident that economics must have *an almost unbounded influence on human conduct, both public and private.* For the great majority spend the greater part of their time either in producing or distributing wealth, and, from the point of view of extension, the time that an ordinary man has to employ in earning his daily bread is greater than that which he can possibly expend in explicit acts of religion. *This all-pervading activity of economics is still more apparent in the state or commonwealth.* In the whole course of ancient and modern history there is scarcely any single important political event that has not been *caused,* either directly or indirectly, by some *economic* influence.

Religion and physical causes may also have been present, *but the economic factor seems to have been the most constant and the most pervasive.*" [9]

When this passage was cited by Morris Hillquit, the well-known Socialist writer, in the course of a notable debate [10] on Socialism with the Reverend John A. Ryan, the learned Catholic apologist unfortunately resorted to the time-worn expedient of insisting upon the extremest and most narrow interpretation of the Marxian doctrine and upon the broadest and most liberal interpretation of the words of his co-religionist. Upon this foundation he based a very plausible distinction between the views of Father Dewe and the Marxian doctrine.

Candid minds, not dulled by sectarian prejudice nor warped by controversial passion, interested in getting at the truth and not in the defense of a particular theory or point of view, will unreservedly identify Father Dewe's views, as expressed in the passage quoted, with the Marxian doctrine of historical materialism. The passage contains a clear and unequivocal statement of the essentials of that doctrine and throughout the entire work Father Dewe treats history very like an orthodox Marxist.

In one respect, indeed, Father Dewe carries the

[9] The italics are mine.—J. S.

[10] *Socialism, Promise or Menace?* By Morris Hillquit and John A. Ryan, D.D., ch. VI.

influence of the economic factors farther than either Marx or Engels did. He distinguishes between the "economic factor" and "physical causes," coupling the latter with religion as subordinate to and dependent on the economic factor. He comes perilously close to abstracting the economic factor from all the rest of life and treating it as a thing apart, the very thing for which Engels rebuked the youthful extremists who distorted the Marxian doctrine by over-emphasis. Marx and Engels and practically all the representative spokesmen of the Socialist movement have insisted upon including in the term "economic factor" the very physical causes which Father Dewe excludes from the term.[11]

When the Catholic scholar says that economics exert "an almost unbounded influence on human conduct, both public and private," he goes quite as far as either Marx or Engels ever went in asserting the determinism of ethical codes and personal conduct by economic conditions. Short of that absolute, unqualified determinism which Engels ridiculed,[12] it would be impossible to lay greater stress upon the economic motivity of history than Father Dewe does in the statement that "in the whole course of ancient and modern history there

[11] See p. 59.
[12] See p. 61.

is scarcely any important political event that has not been caused, either directly or indirectly, by some economic influence." Finally, when he says that " Religion and physical causes may also have been present, but the economic factor seems to have been the most constant and pervasive," he clearly relegates religion to a minor place among the forces shaping history and attributes the greater influence to the economic factor. If the elaborations of the Marxian doctrine by Engels are set beside Father Dewe's statements and candidly compared with them the Socialist scholar and the Catholic scholar will be found to be in substantial agreement. The differences revealed by the most critical analysis are without any practical importance and suffice only to afford room for Talmudic hairsplitting.[13]

Naturally, the conclusions reached by the Catholic scholar do not involve the necessity of his denying the existence of God, the Divine government of the world, or any other essential of religion.

[13] Another noted Catholic writer, Father Cathrein, enumerates a number of important inventions, such as gunpowder, printing, steam engines, electric motors, steamboats, railways and telegraphs and says of them "they are the real revolutionaries, they are the creators of the new world." (*Socialism: Its Theoretical Basis and Practical Application*) p. 139. This is quite a Marxian argument and cannot be successfully upheld except on the basis of historical materialism. On no other ground can we claim that inventions are "the creators of the new world."

With full philosophic sanction, he holds equally to his belief in God, Creator and Moral Ruler of the Universe. Why, then, should any Christian, Catholic or Protestant, insist that the Socialist can not consistently maintain his religious faith and hold a similar view of historical development?

VI

But the economic interpretation of history has an important bearing on religion notwithstanding the fact that it does not deal with the phenomena which religion seeks to interpret, and therefore neither affirms nor denies the existence of God and the corollaries of that belief. Religion is not something apart from and independent of human thought and knowledge. It cannot be subtracted from the general life of mankind and regarded as being independent of the general evolution of mankind and the laws governing that evolution. Religious conceptions are subject to change. Even if we believe that their essence is unchanging and independent of time, place and material conditions, we must concede that their forms change and are responsive to changes of time and place and material conditions.

Let us consider, briefly, the ever-changing conception of God. It is necessary, perhaps, to em-

phasize the fact that recognition of the indisputable truth that the conception of God which now prevails is the result of many changes, and is itself subject to change, does not affect the conception itself. In the words of a famous evolutionist:

"To analyze the origin of a concept is not to attack the validity of the belief it encloses. The idea of gravitation, for example, arose by slow degrees in human minds, and reached at last its final expression in Newton's law. But to trace the steps by which that idea was gradually reached is not in any way to disprove or discredit it. The Christian believer may similarly hold that men arrived by natural stages at the knowledge of the one true God; he is not bound to reject the final conception as false merely because of the steps by which it was slowly evolved. A creative God, it is true, might prefer to make a sudden revelation of Himself to some chosen body of men; but an evolutionary God, we may well believe, might prefer in His inscrutable wisdom to reveal His own existence and qualities to His creatures by means of the same slow and tentative intellectual gropings as those by which He revealed to them the physical truths of Nature." [14]

It would be entirely foreign to our purpose to attempt to discuss the various theories of the origin

[14] Grant Allen, *The Evolution of the Idea of God*, Ch. I.

of the idea of God. It matters not in this discussion whether we believe that man is by nature a religious being, endowed with an innate consciousness and conception of a Supreme Being as the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, or in Herbert Spencer's well-known theory that the idea of God is a relatively late acquisition, a development of ghost-worship.[15] Nor are we concerned with the furious controversies which have been waged between Supernaturalists, Intuitionalists and Evolutionists. It makes no difference whether we believe that God, an Infinite Uncaused Cause, created man and revealed Himself to His creature, or that, as the Intuitionalists have claimed, man is by Nature endowed with the capacity of intuitively comprehending God and entering into relationship with Him, or that the conception of God is the product of evolution, taking its rise in ignorance, fear and superstitution. Our task is not to account for the existence of the idea of God, but rather to explain, if possible, the numerous striking changes in that idea.

The weight of evidence would appear to be overwhelmingly in favor of the belief that religion originated in polytheism, that the monotheistic con-

[15] "There are savages without God in any proper sense of the word, but there are none without ghosts." Huxley, *Lay Sermons and Addresses*, p. 163.

ception of God arose out of polytheism. The idea that monotheism was the basis of primeval religion has been rejected by the vast majority of anthropologists. A great deal may be said in favor of the idea advanced by Max Müller, among others, that the basis of primeval religion was henotheism, a primitive and rudimentary monotheism, in which one God was recognized, not in contradistinction to a plurality of gods, but simply because primitive thought went no farther. Polytheism was not the contradiction of this henotheism, but rather its natural development.

Monotheism attained its fullest development in Israel, which has been called the first monotheistic nation. Why monotheism should have flourished with such special vigor in Israel has been the theme of much disputation. Some, following the lead of Renan,[16] have argued that the Semitic race possessed from the beginning a peculiar innate monotheistic instinct — a fantastic theory quite unsupported by historical evidence. Others have argued that primitive Semitic religion was monotheistic from the first, a theory which likewise rests on no basis of credible historical evidence. Indeed, the evidence is all against it. The Old Testament is replete with evidences of Hebrew polytheism. A single reference must suffice. In the

[16] Renan, *Histoire des Langues Sémetiques.*

thirty-second chapter of the book of Deuteronomy we read: "They sacrificed unto demons, which were no God, To gods whom they knew not, To new gods that came up of late, Whom your fathers dreaded not." Scores of passages affording equally conclusive evidence of polytheism might be cited. Indeed, it was not until many centuries after Moses, not more than seven or eight hundred years before Christ, that the monotheistic conception of Jehovah as the one and only God of the Universe prevailed.

That monotheism had its roots in the material history of Israel seems to be almost indisputable. If we take Baal worship and the struggle to abolish it we see this most clearly. Baal was a tribal god of the Canaanites. The peasants of Canaan worshipped Baal as the deity upon whom they depended for their success in agriculture. Baal it was who gave them their corn, their wine and their oil. Baal was to the Canaanites exactly what Dionysus was to the Greeks. When the Israelites conquered Canaan they speedily partook of the culture of the conquered people, becoming an agricultural people. A far-reaching economic revolution was effected. The transformation of their material life was complete. With that transformation in material life went an important development of their religious life.

Heretofore the Hebrews had cared most for Jehovah, their tribal warrior god. They had little use for an agricultural divinity. But when they settled in Canaan and became an agricultural people, the importance which agriculture assumed in their lives led them to appropriate the agricultural divinity of the land. As was most natural, the reaction consequent upon leaving the wilderness and settling down to an agricultural life led to an almost feverish acceptance of the deity responsible for agricultural success. An almost fanatical tribal passion kept the worship of Jehovah alive, but with it was coördinated the worship of Baal. Gradually, as the Hebrews grew in power, and Israel became identified with the conquered land, the God of the dominant people overshadowed the other. The functions of Baal were ascribed more and more often to Jehovah. Just as the feast of the ingathering which the Canaanites held in honor of Baal [17] became the chief feast of the Israelites in honor of Jehovah, so Baal and Baal-worship inevitably became, in the course of time, absorbed by Jehovah and Jehovah-worship.

It is clear that the invasion and conquest of one tribe by another led to a multiplication of deities. The religious conceptions and cults of the conquered were rarely destroyed, even where their

[17] See Judges, ix. 27.

destruction was attempted by the conquerors. But in general the religious conceptions and cults of the conquerors were imposed upon those of the conquered, while the former also took something from the latter. Bringing their own religious beliefs and worships with them, the conquerors sometimes were content to worship by themselves and sometimes forced the conquered to join with them. Under such conditions polytheism flourishes, there is a multiplication of deities, cults and priests. The monotheistic idea, with its unification of cults and priesthoods, does not evolve until the culture of one people dominates all others.

The warfare upon Baal worship, the destruction of its altars and places of worship by Gideon,[18] Elijah,[19] Jehu,[20] Jehoiada,[21] Hilkiah[22] and Josiah,[23] was due to patriotic zeal. Religion and patriotism were identical. Jehovah was Israel's God. The cause of Israel and the cause of Jehovah were one. Apart from the material history of Israel Baal-worship among the Hebrews, its overthrow and the rise of monotheism cannot be understood. In other words, historical ma-

[18] Judges vi. 25.
[19] I Kings xviii, 40
[20] II Kings x, 18.
[21] II Kings xi, 18.
[22] II Kings xxiii, 4.
[23] II Chronicles xxiv, 4.

terialism is the key necessary to the understanding of those important phases of religious development. Recognition of this dependence of religion upon environment does not require a denial of the belief in an unchanging and eternal God. It is possible to believe that the economic environment is the most important influence in shaping religious beliefs and cults because God chose that method of revealing Himself to man.

In some critical annotations of the *Wesen des Christenthums* of Ludwig Feuerbach, written in 1845 but first published by Engels in 1888, Marx criticises the great philosopher of materialism because he abstracts religious sentiment from the course of history and places it by itself. The theologians have, in a great many instances, committed exactly the same mistake as the materialist, thereby making the whole subject of the development of religious conceptions unintelligible. The Marxian theory applied to religion makes its development intelligible and makes it possible for comparative religion to be scientifically studied. Not until we grasp the important fact that the religious conceptions and practices of a people always bear a very definite and ascertainable relation to their mental development and their economic and material environment does a scientific study of comparative religion become possible.

VII

There is less need than formerly to emphasize the fact that the conception of God changes from age to age. Time was when the assertion of this fact would have been angrily denied. Men have been ostracised and persecuted for less. Today it is possible for one of the most orthodox Christian writers to call attention to the fact: "We see with increasing clearness that the great word 'God,' greatest that mankind has ever uttered, connotes a different concept in every age. The God of nomadic tribes is a tribal chieftain. The God of feudalism, as imaged in the superb mosaic that overlooks ruined Messina from the fallen glory of its shrine, is a masterful feudal overlord." [24] Thus Miss Scudder can write without reproach today: *E pur si muove* — the world of thought moves!

Not only are religious ideas in general controlled and shaped by social institutions and conditions, so that great social changes inevitably produce great religious changes, but social institutions and conditions powerfully influence the conception of Deity. No fact in the whole range of historical phenomena is better attested than the fact that in the evolution of religion the character of the God

[24] *Socialism and Character*, by Vida Scudder, p. 331.

or gods worshipped is determined mainly, if not altogether, by the economic environment. Where the life of a people is largely given to militarism, that being the natural method of tribal and national expansion, the result is the worship of a God or gods of war, mighty in battle. Thus *Yahve*, or Jehovah, the God of Israel, was at first simply a local tribal or family god. The primitive Israelites could not conceive of a single Supreme Being, Creator and Ruler of the Universe. Each tribe had its local tribal god, supposed to dwell in some lonely spot. Jehovah was such a god and the Israelites never doubted that other tribes had similar gods of their own. Fortunately, Jehovah was stronger than the gods of other tribes, so that He could win the battles of His people, but He was not fundamentally different from the gods of other tribes, who were quite as real as Jehovah. Like all tribal gods, He must be propitiated by much sacrifice. Jehovah loved the smell of burnt offerings.

So long as the Israelitish tribes were engaged in more or less constant warfare with other tribes, and militarism was the most important tribal activity, Jehovah was a warrior god. The name Israel means "El does battle." Jehovah was the warrior El, after whom the nation was named. When Israel went forth to battle Jehovah led. He was

always on the side of Israel, no matter what the cause of conflict might be. He was relied upon to bring His people through every crisis in safety. Not wholly forgotten in times of peace, Jehovah manifested His power primarily in times of war as befitted a warrior god. In times of peace He might not even reside among His people. Thus, when the Israelites settled in Palestine Jehovah remained in His original abode, on Sinai, leaving it only occasionally for Palestine.[25]

The cruelties and evil passions of war were naturally attributed to the war god who was the object of worship. That is to say, the mental and moral traits engendered in the people by militarism were reflected in their conception of Jehovah. It is notable that instead of conceiving that they were in some sense partakers of the life of Jehovah, as the modern religious mind conceives that man partakes of the life of God, the Israelites conceived of Jehovah as a partaker of their life. He is forever leaving His abode to share Israel's perils and to participate in Israel's struggles. They could not conceive of Him as an omnipresent being. Nor was there any conception of omnipotence. That Jehovah's power was, after all, limited, despite its greatness, is shown by numerous occurrences. Israel was sometimes defeated in

[25] Judges v.

battle, notwithstanding Jehovah's efforts. For example, in a battle with the Philistines " the ark of God was taken." [26] Again, we are told that in a battle against the Canaanites led by Judah the Lord " could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron." [27] Neither omniscience, omnipotence nor omnipresence was attributed to Jehovah until a very late date. But although these qualities were not attributed to God until a late period, we are by no means compelled to reject the belief that they are inseparable from the nature of God, that even before the foundations of the world were laid an omniscient and omnipotent God was omnipresent in space.

We have seen how when the people of Israel settled down to an agricultural life in Canaan they took the Canaanites' conception of deity and imposed it upon their previous conception of Jehovah as a military God. In a similar manner we find that the pastoral régime was reflected in the conception of God. Thus, He is spoken of as the owner of " the cattle on a thousand hills." [28] Just as when the successful warrior was the most important personage the Israelites thought of God

[26] I Samuel iv.
[27] Judges i, 19.
[28] Psalms i, 10.

as a warrior, so when, under other conditions, the most important personage is the owner of immense flocks and herds, God is thought of as the owner of "the cattle on a thousand hills." Such a conception of God could only have arisen among a pastoral people. The same is true of the idea of God as a shepherd, which holds such a prominent place in both the Old and New Testaments.[29] We never find God conceived of as a loving and tender Father during times of peril and military struggle, and it was not by chance or mere coincidence that Christianity arose during a period of peace. The conception of an All-loving, Universal Father, loving the just and the unjust, equally loving to all peoples, could not have originated or made headway during a period of tribal or national warfare. Nor could the conception of God as a King have arisen prior to the development of nationality and a national consciousness.

Finally, not only is it true that during the Middle Ages God was conceived of as "a masterful feudal overlord," as Miss Scudder points out, but it is equally true that the entire religious consciousness reflected the turmoil and strife of the period. In no other way can we explain the transformation of the gospel of Jesus, with its gentleness, forbearance, charity and tenderness, into the ferocious

[29] Psalms xxiii, 1; Isaiah xl, 2; Ezekiel xxxiv, 6; John x, 14.

gospel of hate and bigotry which was propagated by means of the sword, the rack, the thumbscrew and the stake.

Acceptance of the theory that social and economic conditions exert a controlling influence upon the most fundamental of all religious conceptions and beliefs, leads inevitably to the conclusion that such a profound and far-reaching social transformation as Socialism proposes must have an important influence upon all religious conceptions, including that of Deity. While we must admit so much, it is not incumbent upon us to forecast the probable conception of God which will prevail in the Socialist society of the future. Prophecy is hazardous work. We may, however, be confident of one thing, namely, that the changes which occur in the conception of God will correspond to and harmonize with the changes in social and economic conditions and institutions. Just as people in republics cease to think of God as a monarch, so, we may believe, all undemocratic conceptions of Him will perish in a social democracy. The equality of economic opportunity, the democracy and freedom of the fraternal state will be reflected in the character of the God worshipped.

> As wider skies break on man's view,
> God greatens in his growing mind;

Each age he dreams his God anew,
And leaves his older God behind.
He sees the boundless scheme dilate
In star and blossom, sky and clod;
And as his universe grows great,
He dreams for it a greater God.[30]

VIII

The influence of economic conditions and political structures upon the conception of immortality is even more direct and therefore more readily perceived. The idea of a continuation of life, in some form, after death is perhaps the most universal of all the mental concepts of mankind. Numerous writers have argued from the almost universal prevalence of a belief in some kind of immortality that the conception is innate in the nature of man. There are, however, too many well-authenticated evidences of the existence of peoples possessing no ideas of immortality to permit us to regard such ideas as being innate.[31]

The origin of the idea of the soul and the belief in immortality has been attributed to dreams coupled with the shadow of the body. According to this theory, primitive man never questioned the

[30] John White Chadwick.

[31] Cf. Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*, and *Origin of Civilization* and Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. III, Ch. I.

reality of his dreams. If he dreamt of a voyage, of a hunting expedition or of a battle the thing dreamed of was very real to him. He believed that it had actually taken place. But the fact that he awakened on the same spot as he lay down upon to sleep necessitated explanation. The shadow of his body suggested an adequate explanation. His shadow was his double, another himself, dwelling in the same body and leaving it at will during sleep to go long journeys, to hunt or to fight. And this double, or other self, which could leave his body at will and return and take up its abode, was readily believed to be as independent of life in the body as of consciousness. That is to say, it was readily believed to be as capable of surviving the death and decay of the body as of its suspended consciousness through sleep. The fact that in his dreams he often saw and even talked with his ancestors confirmed this belief. If death should happen to come under his observation, for which there was no obvious cause, such as accident or wounds, as, for example, from old age or sickness, he concluded that the dead person's double, or inner personality, had failed to return to his abode in the dead man's body. This failure to return might be due to any one of several causes. A sorcerer might have stolen the double of the dead man, or some enemy might have prevented its return, or

the double might have lost its way. Thus, according to the theory, arose the first idea of the soul as the vital principle of life, maintaining life in the body by its presence and causing death by its prolonged absence. Thus, too, according to the theory, arose in time the first conceptions of immortality.[32]

Whatever may be thought of this attempt to account for the origin of the idea of the soul, and its immortality, it cannot be denied that man's conception of the life of the soul after the death of the body has always been influenced by his economic environment and its resulting culture. Only minds which fanaticism has made impervious to argument and evidence will attempt to deny that when the North American Indian conceived the hereafter as a celestial hunting ground, in which game was abundant and hunting well rewarded, his idea of Paradise was shaped and limited by his every-day earthly experience. For any but a people economically dependent upon hunting, as the Indian was, such a conception of the life celestial would have been as impossible as it would have been for the

[32] One of the best popular presentations of the theory is Paul Lafargue's interesting study, *Origine et Evolution de l'Idée de l'Ame,* contained in his *Le Determinisme Economique De Karl Marx,* Paris, 1909. See also Spencer, *Principles of Sociology,* Vol. iii, ch. I.

Indian to have conceived of Paradise as a glorified Stock Exchange.

It was long ago observed that the Chinese in their celestial hierarchy reproduced in an idealised form the essential features of the earthly hierarchy with which they were familiar. They carried the distinctions of class and rank intact into heaven, and all the privileges of rank were supposed to be observed in heaven as on earth. Likewise, in the several religions of India we find, almost without exception, the degrees and divisions of the various castes reproduced in the concepts of the life celestial.

Religious critics of Marx have denounced his statement that " the religious world is but the reflex of the real world." [33] They have regarded it as a denial of religion itself, a view which many of the followers of Marx have too eagerly adopted as their own. But in truth the statement is not incompatible with the most passionate and profound religious belief. It is simply a plain statement of what is now regarded as one of the most obvious commonplaces of religious criticism. No competent authority on the evolution of religion disputes its validity. Compare the statement for which Marx is so vigorously abused, especially by certain popular Jesuit writers, with the following passage

[33] *Capital* (American edition) Vol. I, p. 91.

from the pen of that eminent scholar, Professor C. P. Tiele, of the University of Leyden:

"We cannot deny the fact that not only in the Ural-Altaic and Japanese, but also in the highly developed Chinese religions the relation between the divine powers and man is purely patriarchical. Just as the chief of the horde — nay, even the son of heaven, the Chinese emperor — is regarded as the father of all his subjects, whom they are bound to obey and to venerate, so are the gods to their worshippers. The only difference is that the Chinese heaven-god Tien is an emperor like his earthly representative, ruling over the other spirits of heaven and earth as does the latter over the dukes of the empire and their subjects, while the Ural-Altaic heaven-god is indeed the most powerful being, invoked in the greatest difficulties, when he only is able to save, but no supreme ruler,— not anything more than a *primus inter pares,* every other god being absolute lord and master in his own domain. Now this difference is not one of character but of progress, *and answers fully to the difference of the political institutions of which it is the reflex.*" [34]

It is an easy task thus to trace the determining influence of material conditions in the basic concep-

[34] *Encyclopædia Brittanica* (9th ed.) Vol. 20, p. 363, art. "Religions."

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tions of the primitive religions. Just as the connection between the economic life of the North American Indian and his ideas of a future life of the soul is too obvious to be mistaken or overlooked, so, in like manner, the eschatological conceptions of the Eskimo reflect in a striking manner his material environment and his economic conditions and the limited experience which these involve. Who but a dweller in the arctic circle could conceive of a celestial life in which spirits playing ball with walrus skulls create the aurora borealis? To rest the defense of religion upon the denial of a truth so well attested as that religious conceptions reflect material conditions and experiences, must ultimately bring disaster to the cause of religion.

IX

It is much more difficult to trace the influence of material and social transformations in the religious thinking and feeling of the modern world. The reactions are more subtle and indirect and obscure. They are also less powerfully determinative, perhaps, for it can hardly be gainsaid that man's power to control and direct the economic forces is constantly growing. With each increase in that power his life becomes less dependent on the economic factor and the importance of other

factors, the ideological ones, is increased. As yet the subject has not attracted adequate scholarship, notwithstanding its great importance. But we do know in a general way that the great transformations in economic methods, and, consequently, in social and political ideas, and institutions, have been attended by changes in religious conceptions and values similar in quality to the changes in political and social thought and feeling. The democratic trend of the nineteenth century was the logical and inevitable outcome of nineteenth century industrialism. That democratic trend, with its instinctive humanitarianism, was fatal to many a sacred religious conception — for example, the cherished Protestant doctrine of a remorseless avenging God physically torturing His creatures through eternity as a punishment for their failure to do His will and attain His perfection. Such a conception of God could not long survive the democratic awakening.

Recognition of this fact by the clearest minds in the Christian world is becoming more and more common. The following is typical of utterances to be found in the religious journals of today: "Neither God nor man is the same as they were to our grandfathers. We are under a new heaven and in a new earth. Evolution has undermined the notion of the race having sinned in Adam, and

being consequently born in a state of inherited corruption. Now, thinkers see the race cradled amongst animal entanglements from which it has to loose itself, and this natural struggle — which in itself is a virtue — almost by necessity issues in exaggerations and mistakes. . . . The British public has discovered a new Deity. The former Supreme, who was all eyes, and wrote down in a book of remembrance even our microscopic failings, no longer exists except for a few obscurantists who belong to a previous generation. On the throne there is a God of love, who understands and is more pitiful than the best of fathers. "*Tout connâitre, c'est tout pardonner,*" applies to Him. Accordingly, men are more kindly in their judgments of each other, and more hopeful of themselves." [35]

And in still more subtle ways, as yet but dimly perceived, the industrialism and the democracy of modern life have reacted upon our religious beliefs and perceptions. Miss Scudder, with fine insight, has attributed the growth of immanential, as opposed to transcendental, ideas of God to the advance of democracy.[36] It was natural for de-

[35] Rev. Alexander Brown, in *The Hibbert Journal,* Vol. VII, No. 3, April, 1909, pp. 617–618.

[36] *Socialism and Character,* by Vida Scudder, pp. 332–33.

mocracy to abandon the idea of God as a monarch ruling the Universe. It was equally natural for it to develop the conception of an Immanent Spirit. Such a conception flowed naturally out of the experience of the struggle which shattered the "divine right of kings," deprived aristocracy of its political supremacy, and substituted for the direct personal rule of the many by the few the supremacy of an impersonal collective consciousness. Modern science has emphasized that conception of the Immanent God.

X

It is clear that the Marxian doctrine of historical materialism is capable of rendering immense service to the study of religion. As a method of interpretation it is as helpful to students of comparative religion and Biblical criticism as to students of secular history and politics. Used with discrimination, it throws light upon many obscure phases of the development of man's sense of relationship to the Universe and to the Final Reality.

When discrimination in the use of the method is lacking the results are either ludicrous or disastrous. In the hands of the inexpert novice the keen tools of the master craftsman work mischief!

When we are told that religion is simply a by-product of economic evolution, destined to oblivion, or when men seeing how a groping humanity adapts the forms of material life and daily experience to express religious emotions and aspirations, conclude that religion has no roots deeper than the transitory economic institutions, we may know that the economic interpretation of religion is imperfectly understood and improperly used.

This is true even if it is Marx himself who speaks. Though a profoundly spiritual nature, Marx had little sympathy for, or comprehension of, the mysticism of religion, its concern over eternity, its assumption of a communion with the Author of Life and Being. He was Darwin's contemporary and his profound admirer, and naturally partook of the prevailing skeptical temper of that epoch. Writing of religion in a passage which we have already quoted in our sketch of the development of the theory of historical materialism, Marx says: "Every history of religion, even, that fails to take account of this material basis is uncritical. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion than it is, conversely, *to develop from the actual relations of life the corresponding celestialised forms of those rela-*

tions. The latter method is the only materialistic, and therefore *the only scientific one*." [37]

Commenting upon this passage, Edward Bernstein has shrewdly observed: "In this contrast there is great exaggeration. Unless one already knew the heavenly forms, the method of deduction described would lead to all kinds of arbitrary constructions, and if one knew them the deduction described is a means of scientific analysis, but not a scientific antithesis to analytic interpretation." [38] When we know the religious conceptions of the Eskimo, for example, we can readily discern the influence of the economic conditions and the material environment as whole upon those conceptions. Thus the economic interpretation of religion is possible. But if, without any idea of the religious conceptions of the Eskimo, with nothing to guide us except our knowledge of the Eskimo's economic conditions and material environment, we attempted to deduce from that knowledge an outline of his religious ideas our failure would be inevitable and complete.

Like every new theory which comes into conflict with some existing theory, the Marxian theory of the economic interpretation of history first ap-

[37] *Capital*, Vol. I, American (Kerr) edition, p. 406, note. Italics mine.

[38] *Evolutionary Socialism*, by Edward Bernstein, pp. 16–17, note.

peared in an exaggerated form, as Engels admitted in the eighteen-nineties, in the letters from which we have quoted in an earlier chapter. As Bernstein remarks, " it cannot be denied that Marx and Engels originally assigned to the non-economic factors a much less influence on the evolution of society, a much less power of modifying by their action the conditions of production than in their later writings." [39] But even if we ignore the later developments of the theory, and confine our attention to the earlier formulations of it, we are forced to admit that Marx and Engels recognized that non-economic factors influence historical development, that they never regarded the economic factor as the sole and exclusively determining force in history. Hence, we are forced to conclude that the attempts to interpret it as a monistic theory are unwarranted.

Of course, this conclusion is strengthened by the amplifications of the theory by Engels. Unquestionably, the letters in which the latter developed the theory in 1890 and 1894 must be taken into account and their qualifications and elaborations added to the earlier definitions. And when it is so delimited, every excuse for assailing it as " atheistic " vanishes.

In the excess of enthusiasm for or against Dar-

[39] *Evolutionary Socialism*, p. 11.

winism which marked the first two decades of the latter half of the nineteenth century it was freely asserted by the advocates of the new theory, and as freely admitted by its opponents, that acceptance of the evolutionary hypothesis necessitated the rejection of the teleological argument of design in the Universe. Today that sort of argument is never heard in enlightened circles. Even the Roman Catholic Church does not oppose the evolutionary hypothesis. Religion has become reconciled to it. When such a noted Jesuit as Father Wasmann, of Luxemburg, exposes the fallacy of the older doctrine of the fixity and independent creation of the different species, and states the case for evolution in a manner worthy of Huxley, or even of Darwin himself, we are not surprised.

In the same way religion must accept the theory of historical materialism. In the excess of enthusiasm for and against Marx's great theory it has often been asserted and admitted that the theory necessarily leads to the rejection of belief in God and of the belief in the superiority of mind over matter. Yet, from the first it has been a necessary implication of the theory that mankind steadily advances in power to control the economic forces, steadily gains in freedom from economic restraints and in capacity for a free and independent spiritual and ethical direction of life. That

is what Engels meant when he wrote his critique of Herr Dühring: "Just as far as society obtains the domination of the social means of production in order to organize them socially, *it abolishes the servitude of man to his own means of production.*" [40] As a consequence of his greater insight into the laws of economic evolution, and the influence of economic conditions upon life in general, man in the twentieth century is much more the master of the economic forces, much more capable of subordinating the economic forces to suit his needs instead of being controlled by them, than man has ever been at any previous time in all human history. The time of his complete emancipation from any kind of economic mastery is already at hand.

It is safe to predict that, just as organized religion has accepted the hypothesis of evolution, finding that it does not weaken or destroy the evidences of design exhibited by the Universe, so it will accept the materialistic conception of history and realize that it does not weaken or destroy the evidence of Divine purpose in man's slow ascent from the lowly and gross animal entanglements of his beginning to the glory of oneness with God.

[40] Engels, *Landmarks of Scientific Socialism* ("Anti-Dühring") p. 240.

XI

Finally, whether or not the great decisive changes in human history have been effected through class conflicts is a question of fact, not one of faith or doctrine. It must be judged by the criteria of history and not by the criteria of religion or theology. The noted Catholic critic of Socialism, the learned Jesuit, Father V. Cathrein, recognizes this and makes no attempt to assail the class struggle theory upon religious grounds, but makes his appeal solely to history.[41] He admits that class struggles play an important part in the history of mankind, but holds that the Marxian theory ascribes too great an influence to such struggles. Certainly, Father Cathrein is right in criticizing the statement of Engels that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles," as an exaggeration. We have already dealt with this point.[42]

Truly, it is an exaggeration to claim that every great historical development is the outcome of economic class conflict. Nevertheless, class struggles have played a most important part in history. Apparently, only through class struggles has man-

[41] *Socialism: Its Theoretical Basis and Practical Application,* by Victor Cathrein, S.J., revised and enlarged by Victor F. Gettelmann, S.J., pp. 137–140.

[42] See p. 71.

kind effected the great *fundamental* changes in social and political relations, such as from feudal to commercial supremacy, from absolutism to constitutionalism, from the political supremacy of the propertied few to political democracy.

There are moral arguments against the Socialist appeal to the class consciousness of the proletariat which we must briefly consider. The first is that it is unethical to promote class hatred. There are many fine spirits who would gladly ally themselves with the Socialist movement but for this stumbling block. To them, the appeal to the class consciousness of the workers is a monstrous thing. This judgment proceeds from a fundamental misconception. It is believed that the Socialist is engaged in the unethical task of creating class antagonism and inciting class hatred.

But in truth the Socialist has nothing to do with the creation of the class antagonism concerning which he waxes so eloquent in denunciation or appeal. The antagonism is inherent in the social order which develops a class of owners on one hand and a proletariat on the other hand. The Socialist simply directs attention to the fact. He does not hold the capitalist class responsible for existing conditions. He recognizes that hatred is not only unjustifiable but dangerous. The entire appeal to the class consciousness of the workers

has for its object their awakening to the fact that individuals are not responsible for the fundamental evils of capitalist society, that nothing can be gained by assailing individuals, and that only by changing the system can the proletariat free itself. Thus, by turning the revolt of the workers away from individuals of the exploiting class and directing it against the system itself, Socialism discourages class hatred and its sinister offspring, independent personal revolt. It is never the class conscious worker who resorts to dagger, bomb or rifle shot in a desperate revolt against harsh conditions. It is always the poor wretch who does not see beyond the individual, does not grasp the fact that the system is at fault, does not see the need of the effort of a united class to change the system, and therefore acts independently. Socialism by its gospel of class-consciousness has rendered the world a great service in turning the wrath of the oppressed and disinherited away from channels of abortive violence into the channels of patient and consistent political and economic effort.[43]

Another moral argument against class consciousness measures the appeal to the interest of a class

[43] This entire question is discussed at much greater length in the section of my *Substance of Socialism* which is entitled "The Moral Value of Class Consciousness."

against the broader humanitarian appeal to all mankind and condemns it. So considered, class consciousness represents a relatively low ethical standard. With this objection we must be very patient. Unquestionably, a universal race consciousness, involving a loyalty to and unity with all the human race, is a nobler ethical ideal than class consciousness which involves only loyalty to and union with the class to which one belongs. Class consciousness is not the highest ethical standard conceivable. But until the system under which we live has been radically readjusted, so that economic antagonisms are swept away and there is no division into exploiters and exploited, property owners and proletariat, that complete union of all mankind is destined to be no more than a beautiful dream, far off and unrelated to the world of reality. It is not an effective ethic.

The largest commonality of interests possible under the present social system is that which binds together the workers of all lands, irrespective of racial or geographical divisions. The common consciousness of the working class, using that term in its broadest and most liberal sense, is the most inclusive loyalty possible within the present economic system. Class consciousness is therefore the most efficient ethical force yet developed. Furthermore, the whole purpose of the appeal to

class consciousness is to enlist the necessary force to put an end to the system of classes, to make class rule impossible and thereby to make possible the universal race consciousness. So considered, class consciousness is the gateway to that larger social consciousness.

Those who remind us so gravely that no moral gain would result from a change of masters, that if the proletariat could overthrow the dominant class of today and take its place, things would in nowise be bettered, utterly mistake the whole spirit of the class consciousness of modern Socialism. That spirit aims at nothing less than the destruction of every condition upon which class rule might be rested. Its ideal is a world free from conflicting class interests, a world not limited in its loyalties by class boundaries, but welded in a glorious harmony by an all-embracing consciousness and loyalty.

XII

Those who investigate the subject with open minds will find that there is no philosophical or ethical element in the Marxian system which conflicts with a reverent and profound belief in a Supreme Being, a personal God of infinite wisdom, immanent in the Universe of which He is Creator and Ruler. It is possible to believe in the Marx-

ian synthesis in the most unqualified manner and at the same time to worship God and acknowledge Him as Lord and Master.

It requires no evasive interpretations, no subtle metaphysical twists, to accept the materialistic conception of history, the class struggle theory and the prophecy of a coöperative commonwealth while believing as fervently as any Saint of old in

> "One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

To believe that the whole process of organic evolution from the lowest protozoa to man is ruled and directed by an Infinite Intelligence is no longer held to be incompatible with the teachings of science. So far we have advanced. That the whole process of social evolution from the tribal communism of the prehistoric savage to the capitalism of today, with its foreshadowings of a fraternal state, shows the guidance of the same Infinite Intelligence is likewise quite compatible with the science of social evolution. There is no conflict between Marxism and religion.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION AND THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

I

By way of authoritative reply to the critics of Socialism most of the Socialist parties of the world have at one time or another formally disavowed any hostility to religion, and have pledged themselves to maintain complete religious freedom.

The oldest of the Socialist parties, that of Germany, naturally led the way with a declaration upon this important matter. Its first declaration was made in May, 1875, at the Gotha Congress when the union of the Marxists and the Lasalleans was effected. Article VI of the programme adopted on that occasion read as follows: "Universal and equal popular education by the State. Universal compulsory education. Free instruction in all forms of art. Declaration that religion is a private matter." That programme remained in force until 1891, when the Erfurt Congress adopted the programme by which the party has been governed ever since. In the Erfurt programme education and religion are treated sep-

arately, each in a section by itself, and not merged in a single paragraph as in the programme of 1875. Article VI of the programme reads: Declaration that religion is a private matter. Abolition of all expenditure from public funds upon ecclesiastical and religious objects. Ecclesiastical and religious bodies are to be treated as private associations which order their affairs independently."

The programme of the Social Democratic Party of Austria closely copies the German declaration and adds a provision concerning marriage: "Declaration that religion is a private matter. Separation of the Church from the State, and declaration that ecclesiastical and religious communities are private associations which manage their affairs quite independently. Compulsory civil marriage."

Similar declarations have been adopted by nearly every Socialist party in the world at some time or another. Some have dealt with the subject in special resolutions, while others, following the example of Germany and Austria, have dealt with it in their formal programmes. Thus, the Socialist Party of America, at its national convention in 1908, incorporated in the party platform a declaration that religion must be treated as "a private matter — a question of the individual conscience." On the other hand, the Belgian

party has dealt with the subject of religion in special resolutions, declaring itself to be strictly neutral in matters pertaining to religious belief. In its programme it makes no specific mention of religion, but demands "Separation of the Churches and the State; suppression of the grant for public worship; philosophical or religious associations to be civil persons at law; complete neutrality of all communal services from the philosophical point of view." The last named provision, scarcely intelligible to Americans, deals with the practice, quite common in Belgium, of making religious belief and affiliation a condition of employment in the public service.

The exceptions to this general rule of official neutrality have been very rare. In general they have been confined to groups and factions which did not represent the national movements. In countries where the Church takes an active part in politics, where Clerical parties exist, it has been difficult for the Socialist parties to maintain their neutral attitude. Thus, before the union of the various Socialist factions of France into the present United Socialist Party, in 1905, one faction, the moderate French Socialist Party, led by Jean Jaurès, in its programme of 1902, made a declaration of its position which was frankly hostile to religion. It read:

"The Socialist Party needs, to organize the new world, free minds, emancipated from superstitions and prejudices. It asks for and guarantees every human being, every individual, absolute freedom of thinking and writing, and affirming their beliefs. Over against all religions, dogmas, and churches, as well as over against the class conceptions of the bourgeoisie, it sets the unlimited right of free thought, the scientific conception of the universe, and a system of public education based exclusively on science and reason."

In the programme of the party, in the section entitled "Complete secularization of the State," we find freedom of public worship provided for, as well as the abolition of the religious orders. The section reads:

(a) Separation of the Churches and the State; abolition of the Budget of Public Worship; freedom of public worship; prohibition of the political and collective action of the Churches against the civil laws and republican liberties.

(b) Abolition of the congregations; nationalization of the property in mortmain, of every kind, belonging to them, and appropriation of it for works of social insurance and solidarity; in the interval, all industrial, agricultural, and commercial undertakings are to be forbidden to the congregations."

It is not necessary to consider here the causes which led to the disestablishment of the Church in France and the exclusion of the religious orders. That would take us into the labyrinth of contemporary French politics. Suffice it to say that the political activities of the Church led to such widespread corruption and intrigues so serious as to menace, in the opinion of an overwhelming majority of the French people, the existence of the Republic. The Socialists were by no means alone in their fight against Clericalism. Indeed, they were not even the pioneers of that fight. That the long and bitter struggle against the Church, the representative institution of religion, should have developed a bitter feeling against that which the Church represented, and so have given to French Socialism an anti-religious character is not strange. It would be strange, indeed, if it were otherwise. When the struggle against Clericalism in France is carefully studied, we no longer marvel at the resolution of the *Parti Ouvrier socialiste revolutionnaire,* adopted on August 22, 1901, which, as a protest, pledged its members to perform no act of public worship.[1] In the same way, the bitter fight against clericalism in Spain led to the adoption of a similar resolution in September, 1899.

That the Socialists of France should make com-

[1] Vandervelde, *Essais Socialistes,* p. 106.

mon cause with other non-Socialist parties to bring about the expulsion of the religious orders is quite intelligible to one familiar with contemporary French life. They were not opposed to Clericalism because they were Socialists: if they had been ordinary bourgeois radicals, or Liberals, in the English sense of that word, their position would have been the same. In a word, the explanation of their hostility toward the religious establishments must be sought, not in their Socialist principles, but in their political environment. The same may be said of the action of those Socialists in the Italian Parliament who, on February 29, 1904, assailed the Jesuits and demanded the inflexible application of the law of 1848 expelling the Jesuits from Italian territory.

The political intrigues and ambitions of the Roman clergy have done more to make French Socialists hostile to religion than all other causes combined. And, to measure the extent of the reaction, we must bear in mind that many of the early French Socialists were devout followers of Christ, sincere religious believers. They identified Socialism with religion. Vandervelde has reproduced from Proudhon's paper, *Le Peuple,* an interesting description of a banquet held by some French Socialists in 1848, at which toasts were drunk " To Christ, the Father of Socialism," " To

the coming of God on earth " and " To the living Christ." [2] The whole literature of that early French Socialism is vibrant with a strong religious passion. Professor Ely has said of the Socialist movement in France in 1850: " At that time if any one had visited the assembly rooms of a Communistic or Socialistic society in Paris, he would in all probability have found there a picture of Christ with these words written under it, ' Jesus of Nazareth, the first representative of the people.' " [3]

Although some British Socialist writers have vigorously assailed religion, the movement as a whole has never followed their example. Writers like Bax and Leatham have vainly tried to identify Socialism with philosophical materialism, but the Socialist parties and the general Socialist public have refused to follow them. They have preferred the view of Macdonald that " Socialism has no more to do with a man's religion than it has with the color of his hair. Socialism deals with secular things, not with ultimate beliefs." A very large number of British Socialists have been devoutly religious and actively identified with religious movements. The declaration of Keir Hardie, " I first learned my Socialism in the New Testament, where I still find my chief inspiration,"

[2] Vandervelde, *Essais Socialistes,* pp. 130–131.
[3] *French and German Socialism,* by R. T. Ely, p. 146.

is typical of the experience of many. It is worthy of remark that when, in the summer of 1910, some three hundred English Socialists, representing the Labor Party, visited France and Belgium, they bore banners inscribed: "We represent 500,000 English workpeople. One for all and all for one. We proclaim the Fatherhood of God and human brotherhood. Jesus Christ, the social reformer, leads and inspires us."

The oldest Socialist organization in Great Britain, the Social Democratic Party, at its annual Congress in Manchester, April 1908, adopted the following resolution:

"That in view of the efforts of enemies of Socialism to create division and prejudice in the ranks of the workers by raising sectarian disputes, this conference definitely re-affirms the position always maintained by the International Social Democracy, that the Socialist movement is concerned solely with secular affairs, and regards religion as a private matter."

Another British Socialist organization, the Socialist Party of Great Britain, has officially published a pamphlet in which it is declared that "Socialism is the natural enemy of religion" and that the entry of Socialism is the exodus of religion.[4]

[4] *Socialism and Religion.* First Edition. Published in 1910 by the Socialist Party of Great Britain, p. 18.

It asserts in very positive terms the incompatibility of Socialism and religion:

"No man can be consistently both a Socialist and a Christian. It must be either the Socialist or the religious principle that is supreme, for the attempt to couple them equally together betrays charlatanism or lack of thought. There is, therefore, no need for a specifically anti-religious test. So surely does the acceptance of Socialism lead to the exclusion of the supernatural, that the Socialist has little need for such terms as Atheist, Free-Thinker, or even Materialist; for the word Socialist, rightly understood, implies one who on all such questions takes his stand on positive science, explaining all things by purely natural causation; Socialism being not merely a politico-economic creed, but also an integral part of a consistent world-philosophy." [5]

Professor Werner Sombart has observed that nowadays "fundamentally hostile views about religion are to be heard only in the circles of half-educated Socialists." [6] The Socialist Party of Great Britain evidently belongs to this category. It reiterates the now generally abandoned idea that religion and science are incompatible: "Those whose standpoint is the welfare of the working

[5] *Idem*, p. 34.
[6] Sombart, *Sozialismus und Sozial Bewegung* (1908), p. 101.

class can make no appeal on grounds of religion; for religion is an instrument of domination which cannot be used as an agent of emancipation at this stage of social development. The great theoretic weapon of the wage-workers in their fight for freedom is science, not religion; and religion and science are as incompatible as fire and water." [7]

This pamphlet is perhaps the most remarkable declaration of antagonism to religion ever made by a Socialist organization. It is wholly at variance with the attitude of nearly all the great Socialist parties, and is in no sense representative of the Socialist position. Nor can "The Socialist Party of Great Britain" be called a representative Socialist party. It is not, as its title would indicate, the representative organization of Socialism in Great Britain. It is not even a factor in the movement. It is a very insignificant faction, seceded from one of the major Socialist organizations, entirely without influence, either in the Socialist movement or in the outside world. It has never had more than a handful of members, less than two hundred altogether, organized in ten or a dozen branches.

The members of this organization are, almost without exception, malcontents who have left one or other of the larger Socialist bodies and spend

[7] P. 33.

their time attacking prominent Socialist and Labor members of Parliament and denouncing the older Socialist parties. The organization is not affiliated with the International Bureau, and has no standing in the international movement. Upon other matters, such as the attitude of Socialists toward the trade union movement, the promulgation of social reforms, and the policy to be pursued in the political struggle, the attitude of the members of the organization is quite as contrary to that of the principal Socialist bodies as its declaration on religion.

When these facts are considered, this extraordinary document, which the American Anti-Socialist League so eagerly welcomed as a valuable addition to its ammunition, loses all its importance and most of its interest. It proves nothing except that it is possible to find small groups of Socialists who believe and declare that religion and Socialism cannot be reconciled. And that no one ever thought of denying.

II

In every country Socialism numbers among its adherents many men and women of religious faith and affiliations. In the German Reichstag among the Social Democratic representatives loyal Roman Catholics have sat for years. The first Roman

Catholic to enter the Norwegian Storthing was elected as a Socialist, while another Socialist representative elected at the same time was a Lutheran clergyman. In the Socialist Party of America there are thousands of men and women who loyally maintain religious affiliations. At a national convention of the party it is not at all uncommon to find, among the delegates, loyal Roman Catholics, clergymen belonging to various Protestant sects, active Christian Scientists, Spiritualists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans — and so on through the list of Protestant sects.

Because Socialism is the movement of a class in revolt and aspiring to be free, it must value class solidarity above everything else. Whatever jeopardises that class solidarity menaces the very life of the movement. For that reason, if for no other, Socialism must stand for religious toleration, the complete freedom of the individual in all matters of belief and worship. The popular British Socialist writer whose identity is concealed by the pseudonym " Tattler," expresses the viewpoint of the overwhelming majority of Socialists everywhere:

". . . I conclude by most earnestly appealing to my fellow-workers, Christian or Pagan, Jew or Gentile, Catholic or Protestant, Mohammedan or Buddhist, Believer or Atheist, to let no question of

religion divide them in pursuing the road to their class emancipation. Let us learn from the example of our masters. They do not allow religious differences to present any barrier to their class interest or to divide their class solidarity. Let us then be tolerant in such matters ourselves — refuse to allow creed or race to divide us, in our fight for economic freedom; conscious of the fact that only when man is no longer enslaved by man; only when all are economically free, will true and lasting accord, true comradeship, true brotherhood, perfect spiritual freedom and true religion be possible." [8]

The necessity for class solidarity is not the only reason for freedom of the individual in all matters of belief and worship. It is a fundamental requirement of democracy. How could Social Democracy do other than declare itself opposed to any interference with the religious convictions of individuals? Complete freedom of religious belief and worship is inseparable from the concept of democracy.

III

The statement that religion is " a private matter " has been denounced as a vote-catching device,

[8] *Some Objections to Socialism Considered and Answered,* by "Tattler," London, 1907, p. 16.

an insincere statement issued for tactical reasons. We need not waste time over the suggestion. The Socialist movement is too much given to searching self-criticism to warrant our giving any consideration to the charge of insincerity. When the declaration was made in the platform of the Socialist Party of the United States it was not the work of a small group of shrewd political leaders. The platform was submitted to a referendum vote of the entire party membership and adopted by an immense majority. It is not possible to charge a hundred thousand men and women with insincerity and adopting a false declaration for political reasons.

Other critics have assailed the declaration for its unscientific character. Religion is not merely a private matter, they say, but a social matter. It is a social force of great importance. This criticism has been tersely answered in an official address issued by the Socialist Party of Vermont, in 1912:

"When we say that religion is 'a private matter' we do not mean that it has no social significance. Such a contention would be manifestly absurd. Religion is inseparable from conduct, from human relations, and hence it is a social force of the greatest importance. What is meant by the declaration is that religious belief or non-belief is a matter for the individual conscience with which

the State or political parties within the State can have nothing to do. Therefore the Socialists of all countries take their stand upon the broad principle that Church and State should be entirely separate." [9]

The best commentary upon the declaration that religion is a private matter is still the address which that veteran Socialist, Wilhelm Liebknecht, made at the Erfurt Congress, in 1891, upon the new programme, immediately prior to its adoption. After telling how difficult it had been to formulate the party demands with reference to religion and education, Liebknecht said:

"To meet the difficulty it was moved to accept the democratic demands as found in the Eisenacher programme: 'Separation of the Church from the school and from the State.' That was quite right in its time, but at present it does not comprehend all that we would and must say. In the earlier formulation the church is regarded as an institution equal in rank with the State. This is not our idea. We go much further; according to our view, in the free community for which we strive *the church is simply a private association, which is controlled by its own laws, as all other*

[9] *The Socialist Party and Religion. An address to Citizens of Religious Belief and Affiliation. Adopted by the State Convention, June 1912. Vermont Socialist News,* Vol. II, Double Number 8–9.

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private associations are. That is the meaning of the absolute equality to which we have here given expression. Therefore, we say: 'The ecclesiastical and religious bodies are to be regarded as private associations.' *And in order that the Catholics may not be able to say that we wish to offer them violence* we have added: 'Associations which order their affairs independently.'

"In connection with this passage concerning the church we demand 'secularization of education.' This means that the church, that religion, should have nothing to do with the school. We are bound by principle to demand this and the point is so clear that explanation seems unnecessary. However, it is worth while to meet beforehand all misunderstandings and intentional or unintentional misrepresentations to which such a demand in our platform could give occasion. It is well known how stubbornly the ecclesiastical bodies carry on the struggle concerning the school whenever that question comes to the front. One recognizes how much it means to them, Catholics, Protestants and others, to hold and make their control firm over the intellect. You know how the Social Democracy is represented as a red specter, how the ecclesiastical associations say of us that we are a party of atheists, and that the Social Democrats would forcibly take religion from every one and violently

crush the church. *In order to take the foundation from and to break the point of these demagogical slanders and pious falsehoods, we state here that the regulation of religious matters lies with each individual, and we declare religion to be a private matter.* I admit that I struggled for some time against taking up these practical considerations, since their meaning seemed so self-evident in the declaration of the programme. But in looking back over the systematic calumny of our position in regard to religion it appears necessary that they be stated. The Social Democracy as such has absolutely nothing to do with religion. Every man has a right to think and believe what he will, and no one has the right to molest or limit another in his thoughts or beliefs, or to allow any one's opinions to be a disadvantage to him in any way. Opinions and beliefs can only be proceeded against when they become converted into pernicious and unlawful acts, as for example, with certain bigoted sects. But the opinions and beliefs in themselves must be free, perfectly free. We as Social Democrats must respect them, *and those Social Democrats who respect the genuineness and worth of their fellow men will also avoid scoffing at their beliefs.* Above all, scoffing at a prejudice is foolish and impolitic, since it but strengthens it. Only education can be of help here. But if it were our

duty to state that we will not rob any one of his religion or hinder him in the exercise thereof, we dare not offer the church any handle by means of which it can come into the schools, and, therefore, we say, 'Compulsory attendance at public national schools.' Every child must be sent by its parents or relatives to these secular schools, in which no religion is taught, but by virtue of the fundamental statement, that religion is a private matter, *it remains to the parents themselves to teach their children, or allow them to be taught, in the religion which they choose.* At first we thought to expressly state this in the programme, but we found that such a practical commentary did not belong there.

"We demand further that expenditures from the public funds not only to ecclesiastical but to religious objects be abolished. We have added the word 'religious' because there are associations of a religious nature that are not ecclesiastical, and also there shall be no expenditure from the public funds, *just because religion is a private matter.*" [10]

The German Social Democracy has always faithfully adhered to the principles set forth by its great champion. Immediately after the forma-

[10] Italics mine.— J. S.

tion of the German Empire Bismarck undertook to suppress the Catholic Church. Three measures were introduced with this object in view in the three years, 1871–1873. The first of these sought to limit the freedom of expression from the pulpit, the second to expel the Jesuit order from the country, and the third to remove the education of priests from the Church. Notwithstanding the fact that from the first they had been bitterly attacked and misrepresented by the Catholic clergy, the Social Democrats conducted a very vigorous agitation against these reactionary measures. Thus, the " Atheistic " Social Democracy was from its early days a defender of Catholic rights.

To put an end to the persecution of their orders in various German States, the Catholic representatives in the Reichstag introduced, in 1900, a bill which provided that there be " freedom of religious beliefs." This " Toleration Bill " demanded that the religious communities *recognized by the State* should be entirely independent. The Socialist representatives offered an amendment to the effect that there should be complete freedom and independence for all religious beliefs and practices, not merely for those recognized by the State. The Catholic representatives unanimously voted against the Socialist amendment, which

aimed to give to all creeds and beliefs the freedom which the Catholics desired for themselves. But, notwithstanding the provocation thus furnished by the reactionary attitude of the Catholic representatives, the Social Democrats finally supported the Catholic measure by unanimous vote rather than jeopardise the principle of toleration.

In 1912 the German government made a fresh attack upon the famous Catholic order, the Society of Jesus. An attempt was made to rigidly interpret the anti-Jesuit laws of 1872, and there was great excitement and indignation among the Catholics of Germany. The Catholics, the Centre Party, had been a part of the government *bloc*, but the hostility to the Jesuits broke the alliance. At that juncture, the ministry took the unprecedented step of appealing to the Social Democrats to make common cause with it against the Catholic Centre. The hatred of the Catholics for the Socialists was made the basis of a very clever plea. Whereas the Catholics had 90 votes in the Reichstag, the Social Democrats had 110. Had they let their opposition to the Catholic Party obscure their principles, the Social Democrats could have dealt the Catholics a terrible blow. But instead a representative of the Social Democracy assured the Centre of his party's earnest support, and once more the Social Democracy came to the support of

the Catholics in their fight for religious freedom.[11]

That influential Marxist, Dr. Anton Pannekoek, has written on the subject of the attitude of the Social Democracy to religion:

"We Socialists consider religion as a private concern of each individual, and we demand that the State shall take the same position. This demand proves clearly that the assertion of the clergy that we wish to abolish religion is simply a deception and a slander. The platform plank, 'Religion is a private matter,' clearly expresses that fundamental character of our movement by which it may be distinguished from all earlier revolutionary mass movements. We do not inquire into personal views; we do not demand any profession of faith; we insist only on coöperation in our practical aims. *Our aim is a definite, material transformation of society, a different regulation of labor, the substitution of the Socialist mode of production for the present system. Nothing else.* Anybody who wants to coöperate with us for the attainment of this aim is welcome as a comrade-in-arms, regardless of his philosophic, religious, or other personal views. Our aims bear no relation

[11] This episode was dealt with in the American Catholic press at the time. For example, *The Catholic Telegraph,* December 12, 1912, describes the failure of the government's appeal to the Social Democrats. The *Catholic Tribune* of the same date deals with the subject.

to religion — they move in entirely different spheres." [12]

IV

The Address issued to citizens of religious belief and affiliation by the Socialist Party of Vermont, from which we have already quoted, is perhaps the fullest and most comprehensive statement on the subject yet issued by any body of orthodox Socialists. It is a document of more than local or temporary interest and is worthy of preservation:

"In view of the fact that several Vermont clergymen, principally of the Roman Catholic church, have bitterly assailed the Socialist movement, charging that it is hostile to religion and subversive of religious belief, the State Convention of the Socialist Party of Vermont addresses this plain statement of its position to all citizens of religious belief and affiliation, irrespective of creed.

"The aim of the Socialist Party is to organize the wage-workers and farmers of America in a great political movement for the sole purpose of bringing about the collective ownership of those

[12] *Die Abschaffung des Eigentums, des Staates und der Religion,* quoted by Hillquit, in *Socialism, Promise or Menace?* p. 200.

means of production and exchange which are at present used by the few to exploit the many. Only by this means, we believe, will it be possible to put an end to those conditions which are responsible for the existing social unrest — conditions which His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, has recently declared to be analogous to those which led to the downfall of the Roman Empire.

" Beyond this political and economic effort to bring about the social ownership and control of the necessities of social life, restricting private property to those things which individuals can use and own with advantage to themselves and without disadvantage to others, the Socialist Party has no programme or aim. In particular, it has nothing whatever to do with matters of religious belief, worship or organization.

" In common with the Socialists of every country, the Socialist Party of America has declared religion to be a ' private matter.' The meaning of this declaration is self-evident to all who possess ' understanding hearts,' but it has, nevertheless, been shamefully misrepresented by those who are waging warfare against Socialism by unchristian appeals to passion and hatred.

" When we say that religion is ' a private matter ' we do not mean that it has no social significance. Such a contention would be manifestly

absurd. Religion is inseparable from conduct, from human relations, and hence it is a social force of the greatest importance. What is meant by the declaration is that religious belief or non-belief is a matter for the individual conscience with which the State or political parties within the State can have nothing to do. Therefore, the Socialists of all countries take their stand upon the broad principle that church and State should be entirely separate. This is, likewise, a fundamental provision of the Constitution of the United States, and those who assail us for our strict adherence to it assail one of the basic principles of American democracy.

" Proceeding logically from this cardinal principle, the Socialist Party does not concern itself with the religious views or affiliations of its members. In common with other political parties it embraces in its membership men and women belonging to numerous religious sects — Jews, Protestants, Catholics, Bahaists, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, Theosophists, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

" Everywhere the Socialist movement stands for religious freedom and against the union of church and State which has always led to religious privilege on the one hand and religious disability upon the other hand, with intolerance, persecution and martyrdom as the inevitable results. Thus, the

Socialists in the German parliament have always coöperated with their bitterest enemies, the Center or Catholic party, in fighting for legislation giving the Jesuits the right to establish missions and to carry on their propaganda by lectures and publication; it was the Socialists of France who led the fight against the persecution of Dreyfus, a Jew; and the Belgian Socialists who fought for the protection of the Christian missionaries of the Congo.

"In our national conventions and congresses, and upon the most important committees of our party, Christians and Agnostics, Catholics and Protestants, serve with equal fidelity, side by side. Never was any discrimination made against any member of the party on account of his race or his religion.

"In Germany, loyal Catholics like George von Vollmar (one of the foremost living Socialists), George Horn, Karl Pinkau, and Richard Fischer (a member of the party's National Executive), sit side by side in the Reichstag with avowed atheists like Bebel and Bernstein and orthodox Jews like Hugo Haase, Ludwig Frank and Emanuel Wurm.

"In Norway, when the Socialist party first secured representation in the Storthing, the Norwegian parliament, in 1903, it was found that of the four elected Socialists one (Dr. Erickson) was

a Lutheran clergyman and another (Professor Berge) was a Roman Catholic. He was the only Roman Catholic to sit in the Norwegian parliament at that time.

"Again, when a few years ago the quarrymen of Belgium were on strike, notwithstanding the fact that they were practically all Catholics, not connected with the trades union movement, and generally bitterly hostile to Socialism, it was left to the Socialists to send bread and other food supplies to the starving Catholic strikers and their families from the Socialist coöperative bakeries and stores.

"We have set down these few facts from the overwhelming mass of available evidence as the best possible answer to those appeals which are being made to our fellow workingmen and women of Catholic faith in a persistent endeavor to prejudice them against the Socialist movement.

"We repeat: The Socialist Party stands for full religious freedom, but is entirely neutral in its attitude towards all religious beliefs and creeds. It leaves every individual free to follow the dictates of his own reason and conscience, but calls upon all working people, regardless of race, color or creed, to unite with it in an earnest endeavor to change, through political action, the economic conditions which now make it well-nigh impossible for the devout believer to live according to his faith,

and to develop in their stead the conditions which will make Human Brotherhood possible."

V

It is difficult to see how the position of the Socialist movement generally can be offensive to any loyal American, for it is in perfect harmony with the basis of our democracy. It is part of our American heritage to cherish and maintain the freedom of the individual to believe and worship according to the dictates of conscience; to believe that the State should impose no religious tests or obligations upon its citizens; that Church and State must be kept separate; that religious associations must be free and independent of the State; that public funds should not be spent for religious or ecclesiastical purposes. These fundamental requirements of American democracy summarize the entire Socialist position and attitude on this question of religion.

In the actual conflict in the political world the Socialist demand for the complete separation of Church and State has occasioned the greatest amount of opposition, particularly on the part of the Catholic parties. The leaders of the Catholic Church declare that the separation of Church and State must be opposed. Thus, Cathrein says:

"This doctrine is directly antagonistic to the teachings of the Catholic Church, which has always condemned as injurious and untenable the principle of the absolute separation of Church and State." [13] Such statements are common in Catholic criticisms of Socialism. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Socialist writers have taken the Catholic leaders at their word and asserted that while the separation of Church and State is in perfect accord with the spirit of Protestantism, it cannot accord with the spirit of Catholicism, or be accepted in Catholic countries, where the affirmation that religion is a private matter is directly opposed to the pretensions of the Church.[14]

Karl Kautsky, while stating as his personal view that the belief in a personal God and a personal immortality is irreconcilable with modern science, admits, nevertheless, that it is possible to be a good Christian and a Socialist at the same time: "One may well be a good Christian and still feel the warmest sympathy for the class struggle of the proletariat," he says, and again, "the striving of the masses for the abolition of class distinction is perfectly reconcilable with the Christian teaching of the Gospels." [15] But with the Roman Catholic

[13] Victor Cathrein, *Socialism, Its Theoretical Basis and Practical Application*, p. 211.

[14] Vandervelde, *Essais Socialistes*, p. 116.

[15] *Die Sozialdemokratie und die Katholische Kirche.*

clergy, rather than with their religious beliefs, Socialism finds itself in conflict when it preaches the separation of Church and State:

"Although Social Democracy respects every religious conviction and declares that such convictions are a matter of private concern for each individual; and although the doctrines of New Testament Christianity may be harmonized with our aims, it is none the less true that Socialism in its struggle constantly meets the opposition of that authority which rules the Catholic religion, considered as a religion of the masses — the clergy." [16]

We must remember that the Roman Catholic Church has always adapted itself to its political environment. In Europe its leaders may declare that the Church cannot tolerate the separation of Church and State, but in the United States, where the separation is a fact, the leaders of the Catholic Church show no disposition to question the wisdom of that separation or to advocate the change in our Constitution necessary to bring about a union of Church and State. Indeed, many of the most eminent leaders of the Catholic Church in America have publicly expressed the view that the separation of Church and State as we have it in this country is a good thing for both. Cardinal

[16] *Idem.*

Gibbons has frequently expressed this view.[17]

If the view expressed by Cardinal Gibbons is correct, and to be accepted as authoritative, it necessarily follows that there is nothing in the Socialist position with which the loyal Catholic must take issue. The separation of Church and State is the logical outcome of treating religion as a private matter. The two things cannot be separated. With the separation of Church and State all kinds of religious tests imposed by the State must go, religious associations must be free and independent of the State, religious belief and worship must be left to the private judgment and conscience.

Father Cathrein, writing from Continental Europe, in a monarchical environment, declares that the Catholic Church must condemn and oppose the absolute separation of Church and State advocated by the Socialist parties of Europe. Cardinal Gibbons, living in a democratic republic

[17] A statement to this effect, purporting to be an exact quotation from Cardinal Gibbons, having gone the rounds of the press, I wrote to His Eminence to ascertain whether the statement was correct. From his Secretary, Mr. E. J. Connelly, I received the following reply:

"Dear Mr. Spargo: His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, directs me to say in answer to your letter that the quotation you referred to is correct. He believes and never fails to speak his convictions when an opportunity presents itself, that for our country, the separation of Church and State as we have it here is the best thing for both Church and State."

which is based on the separation of Church and State, takes the opposite view. He approves the separation, for this country at least, and believes it best for the Church and the State. Upon that part of the international Socialist programme which deals with religion a great Prince of the Church places his approval.

VI

It must be admitted that, in spite of the formal declarations of neutrality toward religion by the Socialist parties, attacks on religion and the churches are common features of the Socialist propaganda. Sombart very truthfully says that "fundamentally hostile views about religion are to be heard only in the circles of half-educated Socialists," but the number of these is considerable. Professor Rauschenbusch, himself a Socialist, complains:

"Religious men are forced into a tragic dilemma when they face organized Socialism. On the one hand they realize in its ideas the most thorough and consistent economic elaboration of the Christian social ideal. It is far and away the most powerful force for justice, democracy, and organized fraternity in the modern world. On the other hand, these moral elements are fused

with an alloy that is repellent to their Christian instincts.

"There are religious people who are not Christians. Their sympathies are not with the common people, but with the parasitic classes. They do not trust in freedom, but want a strong Church to lay down the law to the common man. If Jesus appeared in modern dress among such people, they would not know what to do with him. To such persons, of course, Socialism is horrid. I am not concerned for them. I speak for men who have drawn their economic insight from Socialism, and their democracy and moral ardor from Jesus himself, and who yet find it hard to coöperate wholeheartedly with party Socialism as they actually find it.

"When they attend Socialist meetings, they encounter a rougher, directer, more dogmatic, more acrimonious tone of discussion than they are used to in gatherings of the educated classes. . . . But they will also find an almost universal attitude of suspicion and dislike against the Church, which often rises to downright hate and bitterness, and expands to general antagonism against religion itself. The materialistic philosophy of history as the average Socialist expounds it, emphasizes the economic and material factors of life so exclusively that the spiritual elements of humanity seem as un-

important as the coloring of a flower or the bloom on the grape. In large parts of the party literature the social and economic teachings of Socialism are woven through a web of materialistic philosophy, which is part of 'scientific Socialism.' The party platform declares religion to be a private affair, but that declaration of neutrality does not exclude persistent attacks on religion by official exponents of the party. . . .

". . . A man of mature religious convictions may discriminate between the economic doctrines of Socialism, which are its essential, and the philosophical teachings, which are an adventitious historical taint of it. But others who may be drawn into the party through his influence may not be able to keep the two things apart.

"Socialist leaders in America have committed an enormous tactical mistake in allowing Socialism to be put in antagonism to Christianity. Why should they permit some of their agitators to go out of their way to belie the neutrality promised by the party platform. Why should they erect a barb-wire fence between the field of Socialism and Christianity which makes it hard to pass from one to the other?" [18]

Now, the expression of hostility to religion by

[18] *Christianizing the Social Order,* by Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 397–399.

individual Socialists can hardly be deemed a breach of the party neutrality upon the subject. Still less can such expressions be made the basis of a charge of bad faith against the party. If the party forbade its members to express their individual opinions if these should be opposed to religion, and disciplined those who did so, permitting freedom of utterance only to religious believers, its attitude would not be a neutral one. The declaration that religion is a private matter does not carry with it the implication that no member of the party must give expression to views on the subject, whether religious or anti-religious. On the contrary, it implies the fullest freedom of individual opinion on the subject. It means that religion is not a matter with which the party has any concern, that it does not attempt to determine the religious beliefs or practices of its members, and that the State must not interfere with the religious beliefs or practices of its citizens.

Nevertheless, when the channels of the party, its press and its lecture platforms, are used for the advocacy of anti-religious views the party is inevitably compromised, to some extent, in the public mind. This is especially the case when the persons advancing the anti-religious views are prominent party members. It does not help matters very much to say in such circumstances that the

party is not responsible. Feeling this, many influential Socialists, both in Europe and in America, have protested against permitting religion to be attacked in the party press or upon its platforms. Thus George von Vollmar, the eminent German Socialist, at the Frankfort Congress, in 1894, protested: "We must put the fine words of our programme into practice and maintain absolute neutrality. We must do away entirely with the equivocation of declaring that religion is a private matter and at the same time continuing the tactics of base and stupid priest-eating and beating on the drum of science which have done the party so much harm." [19]

But the matter is really not so simple as it appears. Those who demand the suppression of the anti-religious views are rarely willing to agree to the suppression of religious views. It is inconceivable that any Socialist party, or, for that matter, any non-Socialist party, would forbid any of its members from basing an appeal on behalf of the party's principles upon their religious beliefs, especially in an attempt to win the support of their co-religionists. Those who are shocked and pained by the numerous expressions of anti-religious views in connection with the Socialist propaganda are apt to forget that the expression

[19] *Protokoll*, p. 146.

of religious views is even more common. It is a far more frequent occurrence for Socialist lecturers and writers to base their appeals upon the principles and precepts of religion than contrariwise. Even if we admit that the instinct of political expediency enters into it, there can be no doubt that the avidity with which Socialists in this country seize upon every utterance by prominent religious leaders favorable to Socialism, and the eagerness with which Socialist clergymen who deal with Socialism from the religious viewpoint are welcomed to Socialist platforms, prove that the great majority of Socialists are not hostile to religion. Indifferent to it they may be, so far as they themselves are concerned, but they are not hostile to it. They do not believe it to be incompatible with Socialism. On the contrary, they recognize that religion and Socialism are not opposed, and that many valuable recruits can only be won to Socialism through the religious appeal.

There is far more toleration for religious views, and far less dogmatic atheism, in the Socialist propaganda of today than formerly. With the subsidence of the wave of crude atheism which followed in the wake of Darwinism, the Socialist movement has become more tolerant of religion. The dogmatic atheism which was rampant in the Socialist propaganda of a quarter of a century ago

is obsolete. Fulminations against religion are still far from rare, but they are no longer characteristic of the Socialist movement.

VII

The association of atheism and Socialism was altogether adventitious. Most assuredly there is nothing in the economic programme of Socialism which is explicitly or implicitly opposed to religion. Nor is there anything in the Marxian theories which the modern Socialist movement has accepted which is explicitly or implicitly in conflict with religion. How, then, are we to account for the widespread atheism and irreligion historically associated with the Socialist movement?

We have already noted the fact that in the discussion of the Darwinian theories, which raged during the first two decades of the latter half of the nineteenth century, it was taken for granted that acceptance of Darwinism implied rejection of belief in God and the Divine government of the Universe. In the excess of their enthusiasm, the popularizers of the Darwinian theories claimed that they so completely explained all that had heretofore been shrouded in mystery, that they rendered God unnecessary. Organized religion, with characteristic shortsightedness and conservatism, viewed the new theories in exactly the same light,

and set itself resolutely against them. Once more, religion and science were opposed, each marshalling its legions against the legions of the other. Once more, organized religion closed the doors of its temples and churches to newly discovered truths. So furious was the controversy that it drew into one camp or the other practically every educated person. That controversy and its immediate results occupy the most important place in the intellectual history of the nineteenth century.

The Darwinian theories inspired a tremendous amount of skepticism and gave birth to a far-reaching rationalist movement. On the side of science the ablest and best minds of the age ranged themselves. All the youthful and progressive intellects accepted Darwinism. Against the Darwinian theories, on the side of organized religion, were mediocrity and reaction. Religion sank to a lower level than it had done for a century.

Under these conditions, on an ebbing tide of religion, the modern Socialist movement, the movement of Marx, arose. A few dates will throw a flood of light upon the association of Marxian Socialism with atheism and irreligion: Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859, and in that same year Marx published his first important work on political economy, the *Critique of Political Economy,* precursor of *Das Kapital.* Four years

after the publication of Darwin's great work, when it was beginning to attract attention on the Continent, the organized Socialist movement arose in Germany under the leadership of Lasalle, that cultured agitator whose proud boast it was that the new movement of the proletariat was " armed with all the knowledge and culture of the centuries." In 1864, just five years after the publication of the *Origin of Species,* when the controversy which it aroused was at fever heat, the International was formed under the leadership of Marx.

In the circumstances it was inevitable that the Socialist movement should be drawn into the great conflict of ideas. That would have happened even if Marx had not given it a theory of social evolution for its theoretical basis. The radical in one sphere of thought is most likely to be radical in other directions. The fact that they were radicals, possessing sufficient independence of judgment, imagination and courage to renounce old ideas and to undertake the arduous and often unpleasant task of advocating new ideas, would have made the Socialists more ready than most men to embrace the new scientific theories. The Socialist movement has always embraced more than its proportionate share of adherents of the most advanced scientific theories, as well as of vegetarians, anti-vaccinationists, advocates of strange theories like the Bacon-

ian authorship of the Shakespeare plays, and so on. Their fundamental radicalism would have made most of the Socialists of the time espouse Darwinism.

But there was a more powerful and universal reason. Marx and Engels had for more than twenty years, ever since 1848, been trying to impress upon their proletarian followers a great theory of social evolution, and the consciousness of an inevitable triumph over social injustice by the workers, inevitable because the forces of social evolution were on their side. And now the Darwinian theories brought new arguments. Evolution was everywhere discussed. Liebknecht, who was intimately connected with Marx in those days, has told us how Marx and his little circle of friends could talk of nothing else. Naturally, they partook of the anti-religious spirit and temper which characterized the scientific movement of their day. It would have been strange if it had been otherwise. It was quite natural that the Socialist movement should have battled for the new scientific theories against the orthodox religion of the time. It was inevitable that the bitterness and venom with which the churches assailed the Darwinians should stamp the Socialist mind with an almost ineradicable belief that religion is the foe of progress, of enlightenment and science. And now that the con-

troversy is over, science having been victorious, and organized religion no longer denies the doctrine of evolution, nor regards it as a denial of God, the Socialist movement still retains, to some extent, the mental attitude acquired fifty years ago. This is especially true of the older men and women in the movement. The younger men and women, naturally, partake of the new spirit.[20]

The blending of Socialism and atheism was, to a very large extent, the result of the confluence of two great streams of nineteenth century thought, the scientific movement and the democratic trend. It was by no means unique. Numerous movements of great magnitude and capital importance have been thus adventitiously blended with skep-

[20] I offered this explanation of the close association of Socialism and atheism in my little book, *The Spiritual Significance of Modern Socialism.* In his debate with Mr. Hillquit, Father Ryan referred to it as "not at all adequate." *(Socialism, Promise or Menace,* p. 195.) But later on he says that had Mr. Hillquit "merely declared that Socialist irreligion was due in great part to the general irreligion and skepticism of the last century and a half, he would have been on safe ground." *(Ibid,* p. 220.) Father Ryan goes on to say that a very large proportion of Socialists had adopted the atheistic views of the popular science of the time before they became Socialists. Now, I have never suggested that the association of Marxism and Darwinism in point of time was, by itself, a *complete* explanation of the antagonism to religion which is found among present day Socialists. I have suggested only that it explains, in large part at least, the close historical association of Socialism and atheism. Father Ryan's suggestion to Mr. Hillquit is a tacit acceptance of my contention.

ticism and irreligion. The American Revolution affords a notable example of this. Many of the leading Revolutionary patriots were skeptics and atheists. This was not due to their democracy, but rather to the spirit and temper of the age. The unbelief of the patriots was just as little due to their political ideals and theories as the unbelief of the Socialists is due to their social ideals and theories.

It was an age of unbelief. Just as the modern Socialist movement arose on an ebbing tide of religion, so, on another ebbing tide of religion, nearly a century earlier, arose the great movement of American democracy. When Timothy Dwight became president of Yale College, in 1795, atheism was rampant there as, indeed, it was among the educated classes in general. We are told that "a considerable portion of the class which he first taught had assumed the names of the leading English and French infidels, and were more familiarly known by them than by their own." The Honorable Samuel Hopkins, who graduated from Yale in 1791, wrote that "The Spirit of Yale College was at that time the spirit of literary ambition and of infidelity." In the autobiography of Lyman Beecher we find an interesting account of the atheistic influences at Yale when Dr. Dwight became its president in 1795:

"Before he came the college was in a most ungodly state. The college church was almost extinct. Most of the students were skeptical, and rowdies were plenty. Wine and liquors were kept in many rooms; intemperance, profanity, gambling, and licentiousness were common. . . . That was the day of the infidelity of the Tom Paine school. Boys that dressed flax in the barn, as I used to, read Tom Paine and believed him; I read, and fought him all the way. . . . But most of the class before me were infidels, and called each other Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, etc., etc." [21] The association of American democracy and philosophical materialism can be readily traced to the influence of the French Revolution. Nevertheless, the association was as adventitious as the later association of philosophical materialism and modern Socialism.

Fortunately, a new era has dawned. Science and religion are no longer opposed. Darwinism has entered the pulpit. The ideas which brought the anathema of organized religion upon Darwin, Huxley, Spencer and their associates, are now preached from tens of thousands of pulpits. Science and atheism are no longer regarded as synonyms. If the preachers no longer misunderstand

[21] Autobiography, Correspondence, etc., of Lyman Beecher, D.D., Edited by Charles Beecher. Vol. I, New York, 1864, p. 43.

and assail the doctrine of evolution, neither do the men of science assail religion and declare that belief in God and Immortality are superstitions which enslave the ignorant. The greatest scientists of our day not only admit that science and religion may be reconciled, but they reconcile them in their own lives.

In consequence of this revolution in the scientific and theological thought of the world the crude dogmatic atheism of an earlier generation is becoming rarer in the Socialist movement. There is far more toleration for all religious beliefs. It is not assumed, as it formerly was, that science means atheism and excludes religion. Most of the atheism that one encounters in the Socialist movement today is a survival: it is directed against a conception of God that is antiquated and crude. It really has little relation to the best theological thought of today. It deals with the childish theological conceptions of the early part of the nineteenth century — as remote from the theology of today as the paleolithic age of man.

VIII

There is still a great great deal of hostility to the churches, even where there is tolerance and reverent respect for religion. Often enough the scorn and bitterness with which the Church is

regarded springs from a passionate devotion to the fundamentals of religion. There is hatred for organized Christianity because it is believed to be false to the essential teachings of Jesus. The Church — Protestant and Catholic — has been judged and found wanting.

This bitter hostility is quite natural. The churches and synagogues have been dominated by the interests of the possessing class, the class against which Socialism as the movement of the proletariat must struggle. They have depended upon the rich and powerful for maintenance, and in return have generally defended the existing social order and resisted the efforts of the workers to revolutionize it. All too rarely have the churches shown any sympathy with the cause of the struggling masses. They have been class conscious to a degree and loyal to the class by which they are maintained rather than to religion. They have either actively opposed the masses or been indifferent to their claims and their interests.

Close association of the churches and synagogues with the dominant economic class inevitably breeds in the minds of the struggling proletariat suspicion of and contempt for organized religion. When, during the fierce class war in Colorado, in 1914, innocent and helpless men, women and children were butchered with a savagery that would shame bar-

barians, the denunciations of the Rockefellers, who were large owners of stock in the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, not unnaturally included biting satire and bitter invective against the religion with which the Rockefellers were identified. The fact that the huge sums contributed to religious and charitable objects by such men is realized through the exploitation of the workers, leads inevitably to a hostile attitude toward the churches and the various organized charities on the part of the class conscious proletariat.

So long as it remains true that the membership of the churches includes the most ruthless exploiters of labor, the owners of ramshackle tenements in which both rents and death-rates are high, the owners of firetrap factories, of brothels and gambling dens, the leaders of corrupt political machines and rings, so long will organized religion deserve and receive the contempt of the workers. In their struggle to bring about economic justice and fraternity the workers are doing a work that is essentially religious. In their irreligion they are often far more religious than organized religion itself.

The Socialist propaganda may be marred and tainted by a crude atheism, its heritage from an age of tumultuous controversy, and embittered by hate and contempt for the churches, but it is, nevertheless, shot through with genuine religious pas-

sion, vibrant with that which makes the teaching of Jesus sublime. Many a Socialist lecture contains more genuine religious sentiment and feeling than the average minister's sermon. Paul Sabatier tells an interesting story which illustrates this point. At a great religious festival at Lyons, attended by all the bishops of southeastern France, the bishop who had delivered the sermon was being felicitated at the dinner table by his admirers, including many of his fellow clerics. The bishop told them that he had just read one of the most beautiful and impressive sermons he had ever read in his life, and begged their attention while he read some extracts. The extracts made a deep impression and there were many requests for the name of the preacher. The bishop asked them to guess. There were many guesses; all the great preachers of France were named, but no one guessed correctly. Finally, the bishop announced that the sermon was an address by the great Socialist leader, the intrepid foe of clericalism, Jean Jaurés! [22]

IX

And yet, closely allied as it is with the ethical side of religion, Socialism can never take the place

[22] Sabatier, *L'Orientation Religieuse de la France Actuelle*, p. 38.

of religion in the human heart. It deals with the things temporal, which are seen, not with the spiritual things which are unseen. It offers no solution of the great ultimate problems to solve which is one of the fundamental necessities of the human soul. While Socialism is a spiritual force of profound importance and far-reaching influence, satisfying the spiritual needs of many, there will always be millions for whom it cannot take the place of a belief in God and the consciousness of dependence upon Him. Its glorious and nobly inspiring ideal of a Coöperative Commonwealth cannot, for these millions, take the place of a sure and certain hope of immortality. Religion is not the transient emotional thing imagined by the adventurous minds who in the French Revolution decreed the abolition of God and in the middle of the nineteenth century forecasted the speedy disappearance of all religion, dispersed by science as darkness is dispersed by light. It will endure in some form as long as humanity endures.

So long as the religious spirit exists it will express itself in organized religion of some sort, even if the name is abandoned. And since it is safe to say that organized religion will always embrace the moral aspirations and efforts of many of the best and noblest men and women, Socialism cannot afford to ignore it, to oppose it or to

estrange it. If the Socialist movement is to succeed, it must enlist the moral and spiritual forces embraced in organized religion. For, after all, there is in all religion an ethical element which is closely related to the ethical element in Socialism, and that ethical kinship makes mutuality of understanding and of political and economic effort possible and necessary.

Organized religion, equally with organized Socialism, reflects its human origin and limitations. It is marred by the frailties and imperfections of the human beings represented in it. But, for all that, in every city, organized religion embraces many of the most intelligent and earnest seekers after social righteousness. The exploiters of labor, despoilers of childhood, rack-renters, sweaters, brothel lords and corrupt politicians may loom large against the background of their religious professions, but they constitute a small minority. They hide their evil deeds beneath the mantle of religion, just as men have cloaked the most selfish and anti-social lives in the broad folds of the mantle of Socialism. But the overwhelming majority of religious believers are sincere and honest. They want, under the title of The Kingdom of God, a social order based on economic justice in which fraternalism shall rule, a social order not essentially different from that which the Socialist

seeks to establish under the title of the Cöoperative Commonwealth. And to the realization of their splendid vision they often bring an intelligence and a capacity for work and sacrifice as genuine and as unselfish as those qualities are within the Socialist movement itself.

It is to be hoped, then, that the Socialist movement will drop its hostility to religion; that its class consciousness will not betray it into assailing organized religion as a whole for the anti-social conduct of the few who seek the shelter of its fellowship; that it will not charge against the devout believer of the present day, and of tomorrow, the crude conceptions of God evolved in the brutal past; that it will not charge against the free democracies of organized religious life in America today the evils of religious autocracy of other lands and other times. Let its protest against religious hypocrisy be as vigorous as it can be made, but let there be a just discrimination between the hypocrisy of the few, the unworthy minority, and the splendid faith and spiritual integrity of the great majority.

On the other hand, religion needs the great spiritual passion, the exalted idealism and the faith with which the Socialist movement vibrates. The ideal of human brotherhood which is the ethical core of Judaism and Christianity, as well as of

Islam, Buddhism and Confucianism, cannot be realized within the existing capitalistic system. Until the world has been revolutionized economically along the lines of the Socialist programme that ideal will be unrealized, a fair and futile dream. The Kingdom of God for which Jesus prayed, as did the older prophets of Israel before him, involved social justice and equal opportunity. Of that there can be no question. And the Kingdom of God is a meaningless phrase in the twentieth century unless it implies all that. Let the thoughtful Christian make a careful and candid attempt to interpret the Kingdom in terms of actual relations and conditions: he will soon find that he has visualized a society not essentially different from the Coöperative Commonwealth toward which the Socialist agitator at the street corner urges his fellow men to strive. Well has Emile Laveleye declared that "If Christianity were taught and understood conformably to the spirit of its Founder, the existing social organism could not last a day." [23]

We cannot divorce the ethical implications of religion from social justice, democracy and organized fraternity, even if we wish to do so. And organized Socialism presents to organized religion the most consistent statement of religious princi-

[23] Laveleye, *Primitive Property*, xxxi.

ples yet formulated into social and political programmes. The Socialist movement is the most powerful and efficient force in the world consciously working for the realization in the social order of the essential principles of religion. The Socialists not only see the moral and spiritual blight inherent in the present social system, but they point the way to that reorganization of society which is essential to the highest spiritual freedom and perfection of collective man. If it is to prevail against the powers of darkness, organized religion must enlist the support of the Socialist movement. The two movements have a great common purpose: each cherishes an ideal of personal and social righteousness which requires for its attainment a social democracy.

Until the Socialist State is reached, religion will be subject to the cruel limitations and restrictions inseparable from an economic system fundamentally unethical and anti-religious. Human brotherhood will be impossible until then. The Golden Rule of Jesus will be crushed by the rule of gold. It will not be possible to be thoroughly faithful to the ethical teachings and implications of Christianity. In a very real sense, therefore, Socialism is the emancipator of religion. What matters it that many Socialists with their lips deny God, if with their lives they serve Him and do His will?

Organized Socialism needs a better understanding of religion, to be more tolerant, to treat with reverent sympathy the religious spirit, and to enlist the ethical idealism of religion on its side. And organized religion needs a better understanding of Socialism, to maintain an attitude of friendly sympathy toward it, to honor its idealism, its courage and consecration, and to coöperate with it in its efforts to establish economic justice and fraternity.

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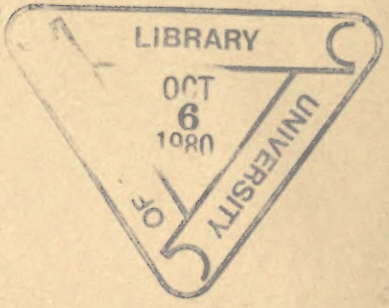
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